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A N N I V E R S A R Y
1941 - 1991

Daily Report

Soviet Union

FBIS-SOV-91-247
Tuesday
24 December 1991

Daily Report

Soviet Union

FBIS-SOV-91-247

CONTENTS

24 December 1991

NOTICE TO READERS: An * indicates material not disseminated in electronic form.

NOTICE TO READERS: The United States Government recognizes the independence of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

NOTICE TO READERS: The name of this book will change from the "Soviet Union DAILY REPORT" to the "Central Eurasia DAILY REPORT" with the 6 January 1992 edition. The "Central Eurasia DAILY REPORT" will cover the same geographic area as the "Soviet Union DAILY REPORT."

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Arms Control & Disarmament

Japanese Report on Nuclear Weapons Rejected [TASS]	1
Security of Nuclear Launch Controls Asserted [KRASNAYA ZVEZDA 19 Dec]	1

Worldwide Issues

Soviet Embassies React to CIS Creation [AFP]	1
Russian Tricolor Raised at UN [TASS]	2
Stockholm Embassy Raises Russian Flag [Stockholm Radio]	2

United States & Canada

Baker Predicts Short Life for Commonwealth [TASS]	2
U.S.' Views of Union Breakup Assessed [PRAVDA 23 Dec]	2
Kondrashov Commentary on Baker Trip, Talks [IZVESTIYA 21 Dec]	4
Editorial Praises Baker's 'Lightning' Tour [IZVESTIYA 21 Dec]	6

Northeast Asia

Ministry Official Reviews North Korean Ties [Seoul YONHAP]	6
Commentary on DPRK Inspection Refusal [Moscow International]	7

Near East & South Asia

Israel To Recognize All 11 Former Republics [TASS]	7
Bovin Views Union Breakup, Diplomatic Tasks [Moscow TV]	8
Soviet Institute To Rebuild Iranian Factory [INTERFAX]	8
Article Examines Middle East Relations [PRAVDA 14 Dec]	9

West Europe

UK's Major Telephones Gorbachev 23 Dec [TASS]	10
Further on Phone Conversation [London PRESS ASSOCIATION]	10
Major Reassured on Nuclear Controls [INTERFAX]	11
EC Members Welcome Commonwealth Decision [TASS]	11
Germany Donates 30 Tons of Food to Moscow [INTERFAX]	12

Latin America & Caribbean

Commentary Criticizes U.S. Position on Cuba [Moscow International]	12
--	----

INTERREGIONAL AFFAIRS

Supreme Soviet

Statement on Commonwealth Formation Issued [PRAVDA 19 Dec]	14
Council of Nationalities Meeting Announced [TASS]	14
Session Begins; Deputies To Consider Resolution [TASS]	14
Speaker Supports Act of Dissolution [Moscow International]	14
Supreme Soviet To Continue To Exist [AFP]	15
Further on Proceedings [Moscow Radio]	15
Lubchenko Cited on Surveillance of Deputies [PRAVDA 21 Dec]	15

Political & Social

Further Reportage on Gorbachev-Yeltsin Meeting	16
Yakovlev Participates in Talks [Moscow TV]	16
Yeltsin Briefs Gorbachev on Alma-Ata [Moscow Radio]	16
Further on Meeting [INTERFAX]	16
Gorbachev Holds Farewell Meeting With Staff [Radio Rossii]	17
Gorbachev Says Commonwealth Not To Survive [Rome ANSA]	17
Gorbachev Delivers 'Farewell Interview' [Moscow Radio]	17
Gorbachev Interviewed: 'Not Farewell' [KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA 24 Dec]	18
Article Blames Gorbachev for 'Chaos' [TASS]	22
Constitutional Compliance Committee Disbands [TASS]	22
Shevardnadze Returns to Foreign Policy Group [Moscow Radio]	22
Joint RSFSR Foreign Ministry Meeting Held [TASS]	22
Spokesman Notes New Role of Intelligence [Moscow TV]	23
Merger of Security Service Assessed [IZVESTIYA 21 Dec]	23
Autonomous Policy Interests Internal Ministry [ARGUMENTY I FAKTY Dec]	24
Former KGB Officers Favor 'Strong Hand' [MOSCOW NEWS 15-22 Dec]	24

Commonwealth Affairs

Agreements on Gorbachev, Shaposhnikov Noted [KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA 24 Dec]	25
Uzbek President Comments on Implications [PRAVDA 23 Dec]	25
Leaders Assemble for First Working Meeting [TASS]	25
Burbulis Reports Agenda for 30 Dec Meeting [Radio Rossii]	26

Media

Newspapers, Journals on 'Brink of Bankruptcy' [Russian TV]	26
Army Daily Cites Financial Strains on Press [KRASNAYA ZVEZDA 21 Dec]	26
Paper Tops Publishing Limit, Drops 2 Issues [IZVESTIYA 21 Dec]	27
More Details on PRAVDA Dispute Background [ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA 19 Dec]	27
Article on Conflict [PRAVDA 20 Dec]	28
TASS Carries Press Review for 21 Dec	29

Military

Problems of Sovereign States' Defense Viewed [KRASNAYA ZVEZDA 20 Dec]	30
Background of Army General Lobov's Dismissal [MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI 15 Dec]	31
Old Structures Said To Oppose Reforms [MOSCOW NEWS 1-8 Dec]	32

BALTIC COUNTRIES

Baltic Affairs

States Ask Industrialized Countries for Help [Riga Radio]	33
NATO Security Conference in Vilnius Ends [Vilnius Radio]	33
Officials on Withdrawal Timetable [BALTFAX]	34
Landsbergis Stresses Withdrawal [Vilnius International]	34

Withdrawal Hinges on Treaties [Vilnius Radio]	34
Deputy Addresses Assembly [Vilnius International]	34

Estonia

Minister: Nuclear Arms 'Still' in Republic [Riga Radio]	35
Talks With USSR on Troop Removal To Continue [BALTFAX]	35
Soviet Border Unit Withdraws 20 Dec [BALTFAX]	35

Latvia

Riga Asks U.S. for Military Aid, Advisers [IZVESTIYA 20 Dec]	35
Plans for 'Massive Military Maneuvers' Cited [Riga International]	35

Lithuania

Council Acknowledges Republics' Independence [BALTFAX]	35
Landsbergis, Military Commander on Withdrawal [Vilnius Radio]	36
Chairman Seeks Commonwealth Help on Withdrawal [Vilnius Radio]	36
Landsbergis Address on Domestic Affairs [Vilnius Radio]	36
Landsbergis Addresses Sajudis Congress [Vilnius International]	37
Prime Minister Pledges Support for Military [EKHO LITVY 10 Dec]	37

RSFSR

Interrepublic Affairs

Leaders Hold News Conference on Commonwealth	39
Minsk To Add 'Final Touches' [IZVESTIYA 24 Dec]	39
Burbulis on Gorbachev-Yeltsin Meet [Moscow Radio]	39
Gorbachev 'Will Not Be Jobless' [TASS]	39
Commonwealth Organization Discussed [INTERFAX]	39
Kozyrev on Foreign Apparatus [TASS]	40
Kozyrev on Georgia, NATO [Moscow Radio]	40
Filatov on Importance of Nuclear Accord [Moscow Radio]	41

Regional Affairs

'Hungry' Moscow Marchers Demand Air Time [Radio Rossii]	41
Threaten To Storm TV Center [Moscow Radio]	42
St. Petersburg Communist Rally Demands Action [TASS]	42
Oppose 'Yeltsinization' of Country [Radio Rossii]	42
Sobchak Favors Speedy Creation of Commonwealth [TASS]	43
To Revive Economic Ties [TASS]	43
St. Petersburg Official Comments on Commonwealth [TASS]	44
St. Petersburg Greens Allege Nuclear Dumping [MOSCOW NEWS 15-22 Dec]	44
Law on Kray, Oblast Level 'Small Soviets' [ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA 19 Dec]	44
Autonomous Okrug Administration Heads Appointed [ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA 20 Dec]	45
Chechen Prepared To Enter Commonwealth [TASS]	45
Dudayev Rejects Proposal To Exchange Experts [TASS]	45
Proposes Official Talks [POSTFACTUM]	46
Dudayev Sees Minsk Agreement as 'Inappropriate' [SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA 20 Dec]	46
Chechen Citizens Given Right To Bear Arms [Moscow Radio]	47
Ossetian Official Cited on Escalating Violence [TASS]	47
New Yakutsk President To Takes Office 27 Dec [INTERFAX]	48

Federation Affairs

Barannikov on New Security, Internal Ministry [INTERFAX]	48
Appeals to Security Personnel [TASS]	48
Security, Internal Affairs Merger Scheduled [INTERFAX]	48

Extent of 2 Jan Price Increases Revealed [TASS]	48
Official Warns of 'Horrible Monetary Crisis' [INTERFAX]	49
Rutskoy Highlights 'Wrong Course' for Reform [TASS]	49
Foreign Minister Kozyrev Assesses Future [KRASNAYA ZVEZDA 21 Dec]	50
Democratic Forces Congress Backs Commonwealth [ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA 18 Dec]	51
Parliamentarian Denies Rutskoy To Resign [INTERFAX]	51
Yeltsin Amends Official Travel Ordinance [ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA 18 Dec]	51
Burbulis on Land Reform, Budget, Property [Radio Rossii]	52
Deputies Accuse Bakatin of 'High Treason' [TASS]	52

Supreme Soviet

Resolution on Ratification of Commonwealth [ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA 17 Dec]	53
Liquidation Commission Grants Deputies Status [INTERFAX]	53
Property Missing From Union Parliament [INTERFAX]	53
Deputy Prime Minister Details Food Situation [POSTFACTUM]	53

International Affairs

Rutskoy Ends Tour of Near Eastern Countries	54
Leaves Kabul; Flag Raised [TASS]	54
New Conference on Results [TASS]	54
Afghan Discussions Detailed [TASS]	55
Afghan President Cited [Moscow TV]	55
Kozyrev, Baker Discuss Nuclear Control, Aid [Radio Rossii]	56
Security Increases as U.S. Aid Arrives [Moscow Radio]	56

WESTERN REPUBLICS

Belarus

Chairman Shushkevich Views Current Issues [Moscow TV]	57
Comments on Commonwealth [Paris LE FIGARO 19 Dec]	62
Romania Recognizes Independence [Minsk Radio]	63

Moldova

Guards, Women Attack Dnestr Police Battalion [TASS]	63
Popular Front Condemns Signing Alma-Ata Accord [INTERFAX]	63

Ukraine

More on Baker-Kravchuk Arms Reduction Talks [KRASNAYA ZVEZDA 20 Dec]	63
Kravchuk Stresses Commonwealth No 'State' [Moscow TV]	64
President, Russian Delegation Concur on Ties [INTERFAX]	64
More on Foreign Minister's Talks With Genscher [PRAVDA 23 Dec]	64
Supreme Soviet Discusses Foodstuff Situation [Kiev International]	65

CAUCASUS

Interrepublic Affairs

Presidents Discuss NKAO, Borders, Gas Supply [INTERFAX]	66
---	----

Armenia

President Welcomes Commonwealth Ideas [TASS]	66
President's Decree on Return of Illegal Arms [Yerevan Radio]	66
Strict Measures Enacted To Combat Fuel Crisis [Yerevan Radio]	66

Azerbaijan

National Council Ratifies Interstate Treaties [TASS]	67
Leader on Alma-Ata Meeting, Peace Prospects [Radio Rossii]	67
Nagorno-Karabakh Appeals For Negotiations [Yerevan International]	67
NKAO Clashes Continue; Troops Withdraw [Yerevan Radio]	67
Further on Troop Withdrawal [INTERFAX]	67
No Road Blockade Reported [TASS]	68
20 Killed in Armenian 'Guerrillas' Attack [TASS]	68

Georgia

Further Reportage on Tbilisi Crisis Events	68
Fighting Resumes After Sunset [TASS]	68
President's Removal 'By Force' Urged [POSTFACTUM]	68
President Willing To Share Power [Radio Rossii]	69
Loyal Forces Aid President [PRAVDA 24 Dec]	69
Gamsakhurdia May Flee to Turkey [Radio Rossii]	69
President's State Reported 'Normal' [TASS]	70
Minister Says President Still Governs [TASS]	70
S. Ossetia Parliament Confirms Independence [TASS]	70

CENTRAL ASIA

Kazakhstan

Supreme Soviet Ratifies Commonwealth Agreement [POSTFACTUM]	71
Nazarbayev Speaks on Commonwealth [POSTFACTUM]	71
All Republics Except Georgia Recognized [POSTFACTUM]	71
PLO Chairman Arrives in Alma-Ata [TASS]	71
Praises Nazarbayev's Leadership [INTERFAX]	72

Kyrgyzstan

Akayev Begins Official Visit to Turkey [cross-reference]	72
--	----

Tajikistan

President Nabiyeu Establishes National Guard [Moscow Radio]	72
---	----

Turkmenia

Deputies To End Supreme Soviet Participation [TASS]	72
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Arms Control & Disarmament

Japanese Report on Nuclear Weapons Rejected

LD2312201991 Moscow TASS International Service
in Russian 1752 GMT 23 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Andrey Naryshkin]

[Text] Moscow, 23 Dec (TASS)—All nuclear warheads that were on Soviet medium- and short-range missiles, as well as those missiles that have outlived their usefulness, have been dismantled. There are no nuclear warheads from obsolete missiles in weapon delivery units. This was stated to a TASS correspondent today by Lieutenant General Sergey Zelentsov, deputy chief of a main directorate of the Defense Ministry, commenting on a report in the Japanese newspaper ASAHI that the Soviet military "does not have precise information on the location of old warheads or on their storage conditions."

Every nuclear munition—be it a shell, a warhead, or a mine—is from the moment of its manufacture to the day of its utilization under the careful control of the appropriate Defense Ministry service. All of the munitions, as well as their individual components, have individual numbers. All movements of nuclear munitions are reported to the Defense Ministry which, in turn, informs the supreme state leadership. The rigorous and effectively functioning system totally excludes the likelihood that there might be "unaccounted" nuclear munitions anywhere, the military leader stressed.

With regard to the working-level consultations mentioned in the ASAHI report, only representatives of the component organs of the United States and of our country took part in them. Therefore, the Japanese newspaper's reference to certain circles involved in the consultations cannot but give rise to bewilderment, Lt. Gen. S. Zelentsov concluded.

Security of Nuclear Launch Controls Asserted

PM2312111791 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA
in Russian 19 Dec 91 First Edition p 4

[Unattributed reply to reader's letter under "Briefing for Readers" rubric: "More About the 'Nuclear Briefcase'"—first paragraph is reader's letter]

[Text] It was reported in the press that during a talk with the Belgian ambassador, Ukrainian President L. Kravchuk recently explained his remarks about the buttons for launching nuclear weapons. It is clear from speeches by Kravchuk and leaders of other republics that we have reliable control over nuclear weapons. This is, if I understand it, the way people see it in Moscow and the other capitals. But let us imagine a situation in which some so-called separatists suddenly gain control of nuclear missiles and start to threaten us all? Although just a layman, I nevertheless think this perfectly possible, especially in today's confrontational situation. Or is it not like this?!

[Signed] P. Yudakov, Moscow

First of all, it is no simple matter to get hold of a missile, especially now when, according to Army General Yu. Maksimov, commander in chief of the strategic deterrent forces, the guard has been strengthened at munitions storage depots and missile positions. The same thing has been done with regard to tactical nuclear weapons by the staff of the Ground Forces' Rocket and Artillery Troops.

The use of nuclear weapons, except by the method specified by our country's supreme leadership, is also impossible. In a speech 13 December to mass media representatives, USSR Defense Minister Marshal of Aviation Ye. Shaposhnikov announced in the context of the nuclear forces issue that this type of weapon, in both its strategic and tactical forms, is under unified control in line with the previously announced scheme. There is no way any of the sovereign republics' presidents can actually use them.

As representatives of the Central Command Post of the USSR Armed Forces General Staff explained, the system of control of the strategic nuclear forces can only be transferred from alert status to combat status when the fact of a nuclear attack on our state has been confirmed with absolute certainty. It will not operate in any other instance. This task is entrusted to the ballistic missile early warning system. With the aid of orbiting satellites and radar stations located along the country's perimeter, it pinpoints the moment a missile is launched from any point on the globe and computes its flight trajectory and the coordinates of the warhead section's final point of impact. This information is automatically relayed to the General Staff Central Command Post.

However, missile installations will only operate if a coded signal reaches them from the General Staff Central Command Post. Nor will the munitions for the tactical weapons, each of which has a code-locking device [kodoblokirovochnoye ustroystvo], function without a special signal. There are also other technical decisions and measures which make the unsanctioned use of nuclear weapons practically impossible.

Finally, there is the "nuclear briefcase." Without a decision from the supreme leadership, not a single missile can be launched.

Worldwide Issues

Soviet Embassies React to CIS Creation

AU2412102491 Paris AFP in English 0944 GMT
24 Dec 91

[Text] Undated [as received], Dec 24 (AFP)—Embassies of the former Soviet Union are reacting in different ways to the creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States [CIS], with some replacing the Soviet flag by the Russian tricolour while others have no flag at all. Here—with an AFP survey:

PARIS: The former Soviet Embassy in France has become the Russian Embassy, a diplomat said. Embassy staff answering the telephone now say "Russian Embassy," but point out that the formal change will take some time to come into effect.

WARSAW: The former Soviet Embassy and consulates in Poland now represent Russian interests and those of the other 10 republics making up the CIS, an embassy spokesman said.

MANAMA: An embassy official said there was a difference between the "de facto" situation under which the embassy now represents the Russian government and Russian President Boris Yeltsin, and the "de jure" situation. Strictly speaking, the embassy still represented the Soviet Union until the international community had recognized Russia, he said. The Soviet flag was still flying at the embassy on Monday.

ABU DHABI: No flag is flying over the former Soviet Embassy. A spokesman said the hammer and sickle had been taken down, but it had not been replaced by the Russian flag.

TEHRAN: The Soviet Embassy in Iran replaced the hammer and sickle with the Russian flag on Sunday.

BEIRUT: The Russian flag replaced the Soviet emblem on Monday, witnesses said. But embassy officials declined to comment.

AMMAN: The Soviet Embassy in Damascus has not yet changed its official title nor the flag, but embassy officials have informed the Jordanian Foreign Ministry that they henceforth represent Russia.

ROME: The Russian flag was hoisted over the embassy on Thursday—two days before the Alma-Ata agreement on the CIS—just ahead of an official visit to Italy by Yeltsin.

Russian Tricolor Raised at UN

LD2312213791 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 2054 GMT 23 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Yevgeniy Menkes]

[Text] United Nations, 23 Dec (TASS)—The Russian tricolor has been raised at the permanent mission of the USSR at the United Nations.

Soviet Ambassador Yuliy Vorontsov was asked by journalists when he will hand the UN Secretariat a letter to the secretary general from Russian President Boris Yeltsin about Russia's continuing the USSR's UN membership. He replied that this might possibly happen today.

A senior member of the staff of the U.S. permanent mission to the United Nations expressed the hope that the process of the replacement of the USSR by Russia at

the United Nations, including in the capacity of permanent member of the Security Council, will go smoothly and not give rise to any conflict.

Stockholm Embassy Raises Russian Flag

LD2312215591 Stockholm Sveriges Radio Network in Swedish 2100 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Text] The Soviet Embassy in Stockholm today hoisted the flag of the Russian Republic after Russian President Boris Yeltsin declared last Thursday that the Soviet Foreign Ministry had been abolished. An embassy spokesman said today that one feels that one is forced to follow Yeltsin's decree.

United States & Canada

Baker Predicts Short Life for Commonwealth

LD2312160191 Moscow TASS in English 1540 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Text] Washington December 23 TASS—The new Commonwealth of Independent States will not live long, U.S. Secretary of state James Baker said after his visit to several former Soviet republics earlier this month.

In an article published by NEW YORK TIMES on Sunday, Baker said Washington will soon have to deal with several independent states conducting different policies and having different chances for success.

Former Soviet republics, swept over by the drive for independence, will not be able to cooperate within the Commonwealth, which implies common military and economic policy, the newspaper said.

Baker stressed the forces tearing the country apart are so strong, that the Commonwealth will most likely be unable to work out a serious economic policy and republics will launch their own economic reforms.

Baker believes some of the republics, mostly those rich in natural resources, may as well survive outside the Commonwealth.

The Commonwealth may at best conduct a mutual military policy, including a unified control over nuclear weapons until they are dismantled in all republics, except Russia. But it also remains to be seen, the newspaper said.

U.S.' Views of Union Breakup Assessed

PM2312171291 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 23 Dec 91 p 5

[Correspondent Vladislav Drobkov article: "What Will Rise From the Ruins of a Superpower? Recent Events 'in the Territory of the Former USSR' Are Being Widely Discussed in the United States"]

[Text] Washington—At Washington's intersections, next to the pedestrian walks, there are brightly colored iron

stands—automatic newspaper sales dispensers. Throughout the past week familiar faces looked out distantly on Washington's pre-Christmas bustle through the little windows in the dispensers—Mikhail Gorbachev and Boris Yeltsin, Leonid Kravchuk and Nursultan Nazarbayev. These same faces flitted from one television program to another, from news summaries to analytical reviews.

Thus Sunday, when the details of the agreement reached in Alma-Ata between the republics that have joined the Commonwealth reached the United States, these same faces once again appeared on the front pages of the newspapers here. As THE WASHINGTON POST writes, the leaders of 11 former Soviet republics have replaced the Soviet Union with the new Commonwealth of Independent States and given Russian President Boris Yeltsin a key role in the control of the nuclear arsenal of the former communist superpower. Virtually all the leading newspapers devote numerous commentaries and editorial articles to the events in our country and the agreement concluded in Alma-Ata. However, local commentators, to all appearances, still have an insufficiently clear idea of the future functioning of the new state formation, although most likely no such clarity exists even in our country.

Television commentators tried without great success to obtain from Russian, Ukrainian, or Belarussian politicians a comprehensible answer to the question: What will remain, on one-sixth of the world's dry land, after the final breakup of the former Union?

Representatives of the administration, including President G. Bush himself and U.S. Secretary of State J. Baker, who traveled around the ruins of the USSR the other day, have repeated a highly elastic formula that has recently been introduced into the political lexicon here: The United States is not, of course, interfering in the struggle inside the former Union, but is observing it carefully; it welcomes the independence proclaimed by them, but sees no need to hurry over diplomatic recognition. And so on, in the style of "yes, but... however... if...."

Washington is patently in no hurry to put a timetable on the official recognition of the newly formed states, as J. Baker said so insistently during his visit to us. At a news conference given by G. Bush Thursday, three times the president was asked a question about the prospects for U.S. recognition of Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and the other republics and of their newly formed Commonwealth itself. All three times Bush evaded a direct answer, stating that first the republics themselves should sort out their own affairs and mutual relations.

The only thing that is declared here clearly and unequivocally at all official levels is the chief demand made by the United States either to the disappearing center or to the increasingly strong republic authorities—the demand not to lose effective control over the nuclear potential of the disintegrating superpower. It seems to me that in Washington the attitude toward what is

happening in our country is assessed primarily from the viewpoint of the possible effect of these events on the fate of the over 27,000 nuclear warheads that are still in the armory of our army, which is now being divided up into national barracks.

It is this problem, to judge by the local coverage and commentaries on the U.S. secretary of state's visit to us, that is currently of greatest concern to the White House, Congress, the Pentagon, and the CIA. Other problems relating to the breakup of the USSR take second place.

It is therefore not surprising that in political circles here and in the press any assurances of willingness to ensure reliable oversight of the Soviet nuclear potential that J. Baker was able to obtain in Moscow, Minsk, or anywhere else are greeted rapturously. And the Ukrainian president's statement of readiness to embark as soon as possible on destroying the nuclear weapons located on the territory under his jurisdiction was greeted with particular enthusiasm here. The State Department hastened to give assurances that experts in the dismantling and destruction of nuclear munitions are ready to fly to our country as early as next month. At the same time Washington was very concerned when Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev expressed the intention to keep the nuclear arms that are sited on Kazakh soil.

As two "high-ranking figures" in the administration who wish to remain anonymous stated, the White House would like the republics unilaterally to reduce the nuclear potential to the level of the French and British arsenals. This may prompt the U.S. President to examine new cuts in the American arsenal too.

The need to exploit as quickly as possible the opportunities that are now opening up for nuclear disarmament by the former Soviet republics was noted this week by Republican Richard Lugar, member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and Democrat Sam Nunn, chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee. "This is a unique moment in history, and we will not be forgiven 10, 15, or even five years from now if we fail to tackle these nuclear armaments and nuclear technology, seeking to erect a barrier to the proliferation that could begin if we do not do this," Nunn explained. At the same time spokesmen for the administration admitted, according to THE WASHINGTON TIMES, that they do not yet have a plan of action in this sphere.

It seems only recently that we and the United States successfully completed the elimination of the entire class of medium- and shorter-range nuclear missiles and planned further mutual reduction of thousands of nuclear munitions. Experience has been accumulated in joint verification and monitoring. The favorite principle of the previous American president, "trust but verify," was put into practice. The unprecedented scope of the "parade of sovereignties" could undeniably cause our adversaries of yesterday, and indeed our allies, entirely legitimate concern over the potential for the "Day of

Judgment." But for the time being, even the U.S. Administration admits that it has no evidence that Soviet nuclear arsenals could escape from control or fall into the wrong hands. J. Baker's recent statement that events similar to those in Yugoslavia could develop on the territory of the former Union, which is packed with nuclear weapons, is seen as an obvious exaggeration even here. Many people in the United States are confident that the Russians, Ukrainians, Belarussians, Kazakhs, and all the other "children of different peoples" have the intelligence and patience not to reach the point of internecine strife amid the ruins of the "indissoluble Union." The specter of a "Yugoslavia with nuclear missiles" is evoked here mainly in order to justify delays with their own disarmament.

The other day I was present at one of the debates held regularly by the Kennan Institute of Advanced Russian Studies and the affiliated Woodrow Wilson Center. This center, it must be said, has in recent years launched a wide range of academic studies in connection with various spheres of Soviet life—from ideology to medicine, from culture to foreign policy. I was attracted both by the topic under discussion—the characteristics of the new ruling elite in the former Soviet society—and the name of the leading opponent, Professor Alex Pravda. So a man who shares our newspaper's name does not share the majority of the gloomy predictions about our country's future. As he said, he cannot imagine the drastic and irrevocable self-isolation of republic states which were so closely interlinked for decades. Like it or not, in time they will have to restore the ruptured economic and other ties, in the professor's view. And in future there is the possibility of creating something resembling the Common Market on the territory of the former Soviet Union. The centrifugal forces that divided the Union, although they are at their strongest and most marked today, are basically political and short-term in nature. They are a reaction to the former overcentralization. But they will not be decisive for ever, the emergence of unifying trends is also possible. Although in the initial stage, for two or three years, anything can be expected—anarchy, upheavals. But I do not believe dark reaction will come to power in your country, the professor said.

Similar conclusions are drawn by certain other researchers and observers here. Some people even think that the recent upheavals—the proclamation of the Commonwealth of States that were recently Union republics, the center's final loss of power—although they objectively reflect the republics' reluctance to subordinate themselves to bankrupt and weakened central structures, are a consciously inappropriate reaction to the real situation. As people here say, you do not set fire to the house to cook an omelette.

All the major newspapers are now full of predictions and commentaries on what is happening in the "territory of the former Soviet Union." Every day they paint gloomy pictures of Soviet life.

Incidentally, among the U.S. public, in its most diverse strata, there is a strong desire to help Soviet people to survive the difficulties afflicting them and alleviate the painful consequences of perestroika. Various charitable organizations are collecting packages for needy people in Moscow, Minsk, St. Petersburg, and Dnepropetrovsk.

The U.S. Government is also gradually stepping up its program of humanitarian aid to the USSR. Last week U.S. planes carrying food and medical supplies from stocks collected by the Americans during operation "Desert Storm" began to arrive in our cities. G. Bush's administration has put forward the initiative for an international conference to be held in Washington in January to coordinate aid to the Soviet Union.

There are also those here who openly rejoice in the "breakup of the evil empire" and the "final collapse of communism," embodied in the disintegration of the Soviet Union. But there are many others, sensible people, who, though they are by no means burning with sympathy for communist ideology, are nonetheless concerned about such rapid changes in our country which carry a threat of potential outbreaks of instability and conflicts, who sympathize with our people's sufferings. As for the opinion of Washington politicians, this was perhaps expressed best of all by U.S. Vice President Dan Quayle. He stated in an interview this week that thus far, according to his observations, the breakup of the Soviet Union "has gone surprisingly well."

Well, there are, from the American standpoint, of course, substantial grounds for that view.

Kondrashov Commentary on Baker Trip, Talks

PM2312174391 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian
21 Dec 91 Union Edition p 7

[Stanislav Kondrashov commentary under "Political Observer's Opinion" rubric: "Baker at the Cradle of the Commonwealth of Independent States."]

[Text] When they came out to the microphones after the four-hour-long talks Boris Yeltsin had a combatively decisive look, but James Baker, lacking the obligatory American smile, was somehow aloof and a little embarrassed. We saw this on television. Yeltsin received the U.S. secretary of state for the first time in the Kremlin's St. Catherine's Hall as the first person in Moscow and Russia, having on his side, as living proof, the ministers of defense and internal affairs of, as he said directly, the former Soviet Union. James Baker for the first time had the Russian president and not the USSR president as his main interlocutor in Moscow. And he still had before him the delicate mission of bidding farewell to Mikhail Gorbachev in this same St. Catherine's Hall.

As a gentleman the secretary of state could not share in the victor's triumph, as it was President George Bush's partner and virtual friend, as well as his own, who had been defeated. He also could not share this feeling as an American pragmatist who on the one hand understands

and recognizes the fact of a changing of the guard in the Kremlin, but on the other hand is concerned by the problems which are mounting up because of the Soviet Union just at the time when it has itself ceased to be a problem for the West, as it were, and has gone and collapsed.

Last Sunday Baker went straight from the airport to meet Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Andrey Kozyrev, bypassing his old friend Eduard Shevardnadze. And Kozyrev immediately posed the question of U.S. recognition of Russia, and of Russia's wanting to receive the Soviet Union's permanent seat on the Security Council. Yeltsin repeated these demands, something which somewhat intensified Baker's aloof demeanor, as well as the monotonously evasive nature of his answers at all stages of his lightning trip.

He heard requests for immediate recognition everywhere, and everywhere he repeated: I will report this to the President and we will examine it carefully. No more than this.

In the first place how can you recognize all these new states if the legal procedure of the USSR's official dissolution has not been completed and if Gorbachev has still not resigned? In this world which we call civilized, excessive haste is considered to be indecent.

Second, and more importantly, an appropriately formulated price must be paid for recognition; otherwise, businesslike Americans would not be businesslike Americans. Back in September Baker named five principles as the price of joining the world community for the Soviet Union's successors: from observing human rights and those of national minorities to respecting previously adopted obligations, first and foremost in nuclear weapons control.

If one simplifies somewhat the point of Baker's probing and fact-finding, it lies in exchanging diplomatic recognition for guarantees of good behavior in the international arena from novices who have been excited by the act of their birth and who are inexperienced and, God forbid, ready to take risks. The nuclear theme became a leitmotiv in the U.S. secretary of state's conversations everywhere, apart maybe from in Bishkek, because Askar Akayev lacks nuclear weapons.

Whereas previously strategic arsenals were situated on the territory of one state—the Soviet Union—they are now on the territories of four states. And if you take into consideration that we and the Americans will still be able to destroy each other many times over, then even in Belarus—to take a hypothetical example—there will be enough for the entire United States. This is what bothers Washington, but not as a worst-case scenario and not as someone's evil scheme, but as the most severe "eruption" of anarchy.

To squeeze the maximum out of them in the form of guarantees of dependability in the control over nuclear weapons, their storage, destruction, and nonuse—this is

what Baker sought to secure. He received a series of assurances from the presidents he talked to. Assurances that the treaty on the reduction of strategic nuclear weapons which Bush and Gorbachev concluded four-and-a-half months ago (which is already a different era) will be implemented in all its provisions, in particular those concerning arsenals on the four republics' territories. According to information from Baker's entourage, the new states are also prepared to assume commitments on additional and accelerated reductions. They are prepared to accept American assistance to destroy tactical nuclear weapons, for which, as we know, the U.S. Congress has appropriated—as a start—\$400 million. All have promised to adhere to a policy of the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons, which is also an obligatory prior condition of U.S. and Western recognition of the new states.

In each capital Baker also had conversations with each main interlocutor "one on one," that same kind of conversations which, you will recall, were always being granted in a particularly ceremonial manner under Gorbachev and are still being granted today. Only the public has even fewer opportunities to find out about the contents of these conversations, because "out in the sticks" it is even easier than in Moscow to keep the mass media at a respectful distance. What were the presidents trying to secure from Uncle Sam's plenipotentiary emissary? What did he or did he not promise them?

Of course, the fate of the "black briefcase" with its nuclear launch codes interests everybody. Does it continue to be in the possession of Gorbachev, who has not yet relinquished the duties of supreme commander in chief? According to a new scheme being expounded by Yeltsin, a military man is now destined for this post (presumably Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov), but his functions will most probably be military and technical. The right to use nuclear weapons passes to a collective political organ—the four nuclear republics' presidents.

As Baker ascertained, this principle is accepted in Alma-Ata, Minsk, and Kiev. But, behind the principle, fairly important "nuances" are beginning to emerge which prove that far from everything has yet been worked out and that, naturally, Moscow's word is no longer binding in the other capitals. Belarus is speaking out most definitely in favor of nonnuclear status. In the Ukraine, Leonid Kravchuk, having assumed the powers of supreme commander in chief, intends to gradually transfer to his command the conventional armed forces stationed there, and as far as the nuclear forces are concerned, he also advocates nonnuclear status, but not immediately.

However, it was not Kravchuk but Nursultan Nazarbayev who most of all shook Yeltsin's founding premise that within some time frame all nuclear arms on the three republics' territories will either be destroyed or moved to Russia. After his conversation with Baker, the Kazakh president reported, first, that he insists on "a special agreement to control nuclear weapons through a

coordinating center"—a sound idea inasmuch as this matter needs to be extremely well-defined and precise.

Second, he stated—and this was sensation No. 1—that nuclear weapons will remain on Kazakh soil. Here is the commentary of America's NBC television company: "Monday Yeltsin assured Secretary of State Baker that only Russia is retaining Soviet nuclear missiles. But on Wednesday the leader of the large Asiatic republic—Kazakhstan—made a new statement to Baker.... Yeltsin's assurances and Nazarbayev's renunciation of them immediately raised doubts as to Yeltsin's capability to carry out his promises.... The problem of nuclear weapons patently demonstrates what kind of difficulties await the Commonwealth."

By retaining his nuclear card Nazarbayev is showing that he has not forgotten how he was ignored in Minsk and Brest. He also—though not without risk of further problems—is increasing Kazakhstan's authority in Western eyes. And, however strange it may seem at first glance, he is cementing the Muslim republics' participation in the new Commonwealth, because the Slavs will find it more difficult to part with them having once abandoned nuclear weapons to the mercy of fate.

In Alma-Ata on Saturday no less than nine participants are due to work out in detail agreements on the Commonwealth of Independent States [CIS]. Up until now the struggle against the center has united them. It has finished in victory, and now they will have to extend a constructive platform for common actions. Aside from the obvious economic necessity, there is the thirst for international recognition. Whether this thirst is satisfied depends directly on the balance and coordination of the principal players in the area of nuclear security. Something which James Baker, the first important guest to visit the cradle of the CIS, helped us understand.

Editorial Praises Baker's 'Lightning' Tour

*PM2412112991 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian
21 Dec 91 Union Edition p 10*

["Editorial Viewpoint": "James Baker, Adviser to the Commonwealth of Independent States"]

[Text] Secretary of State James' Baker's lightning tour of five republics left a somewhat strange sensation: This was not a visit by a high-ranking foreign guest but an older and perhaps in some ways wiser colleague.

It is understandable that the United States is acting in its own national interests and that Baker's trip was initiated primarily by an acute concern for the fate of former Soviet Union's nuclear arsenal. But there has never been the kind of situation in which America's national interests were so closely linked with, or even close to, the interests of Russia and the other republics. Never before has the United States had an opportunity or shown such a desire to exert a positive influence on the development of events in the USSR or the Commonwealth.

The reason why is also understandable. Just as we in the Commonwealth are interested, so the United States is interested in averting chaos and civil war on territories where 27,000 nuclear warheads are deployed. Just as we are concerned, the United States is interested in the success of the economic reform so as to avert an invasion of millions of refugees and create a grandiose new open market in the world. As much as the leaders in Moscow, Minsk, Kiev, Alma-Ata, and Bishkek are interested in recognition and direct dialogue with America, so Washington wants to deal with familiar and predictable partners. Those who share democratic values, who observe human and minority rights, and who recognize commitments under international treaties and existing borders. To one extent or another the Secretary of State received assurances from his new partners of a desire to meet those criteria for recognition formulated in Baker's now memorable "five principles." Recently, incidentally, the EC foreign ministers approved virtually the same tenets.

On the eve of the visit, Baker delivered a major program speech at Princeton University, where he urged America and the West not to miss a colossal opportunity to create a new and more just world order and together try to avoid the dangers which the collapse of the communist system entails. In each of the new capitals where the Secretary of State stopped over, he tried to distance himself from internal affairs. Wherever he went the discussion inevitably turned to subjects which until recently would have been considered interference in the most notorious "internal affairs."

But not now. On the contrary, the leaders of the new states themselves began the discussion of these themes as though confidentially and candidly consulting with a guest. There is no infringement of national dignity in that, of course: America has earned our trust by its balanced, circumspect, and firm approach to our problems. And it is less important that Baker discovered clear divergences in the republics' positions on nuclear weapons. Russia wants to remain the only nuclear power. Kazakhstan intends to retain nuclear weapons so long as Russia has them. Ukraine is not going to hand over its missiles and warheads to Russia but will destroy them all before the year 2000. Belarus will be nuclear-free regardless of what the rest think. It is less important that Baker provided a differentiated assessment of the degree to which the five republics have progressed toward his idea of democracy (Ukraine scored top mark).

What is important is that we sensed support and that a firm helping hand was extended to us. The rest is down to us.

Northeast Asia

Ministry Official Reviews North Korean Ties

*SK2412015291 Seoul YONHAP in English 0119 GMT
24 Dec 91*

[Text] Moscow, Dec. 24 (YONHAP)—Dissolution of the Soviet Union will inevitably lead to a review of the 1961

Treaty of Friendship and Mutual Assistance signed between Pyongyang and Moscow, a Russian (formerly Soviet) Foreign Ministry official said Tuesday.

The state that had faithfully fulfilled its responsibilities under the time-honored treaty no longer existed, Valeriy Ermolov, a counselor in charge of North Korean Affairs, told YONHAP NEWS AGENCY.

The new Commonwealth of Independent States that has replaced the Soviet Union would resolutely sever the shackles of past ideology, he said, maintaining that Pyongyang-Moscow ties would look extremely ridiculous in the eyes of the world for all the pledge that all international treaties and agreements signed by the Soviet Union with other countries and international organizations would be honored by the Commonwealth.

The Russian official said, however, that review of the pact should not mean the virtual collapse of their relationship "for such a development would only destroy the strategic security system on the Korean peninsula and in Northeast Asia."

Similar treaties the Soviet Union had with Eastern European countries had already been scrapped in the wake of the political changes and the one between Moscow and Pyongyang was an added burden on the Commonwealth leadership, Ermolov said.

"I don't think the treaty will live long," he said, calling on North Korea to awaken from such illusions as "proletarian internationalism" and "international obligation."

The Commonwealth should make its stance on its ties with Pyongyang clear in a way Seoul and Washington can trust, he said.

Article 1 of the treaty deserved revision or elimination as it stipulates automatic military assistance in time of war between the Soviet Union and another country, or between North Korea and any other nation.

"As long as the article remains intact, the Soviet Union or the Commonwealth may always be committed to military clashes on the Korean peninsula," the official said.

The existence of the pact would be unhelpful to confidence building between either South Korea and the Commonwealth of Independent States, or to Washington-Commonwealth ties, he said.

In the current circumstances, when a good neighborly cooperative pact is imminent between Seoul and the Commonwealth, it was imperative to let Pyongyang understand clearly that there would be no automatic application of Article 1, he said.

Commentary on DPRK Inspection Refusal

SK2312084691 Moscow Radio Moscow in Korean
1100 GMT 22 Dec 91

[Aleksey Kondrachev commentary]

[Text] ROK President No Tae-u declared that U.S. nuclear weapons have been completely removed from the ROK. How is the issue of turning the Korean peninsula into a nuclear-free zone going? Station commentator Aleksey Kondrachev writes:

The news from Seoul is not sensational. Through George Bush's proposal for reducing nuclear weapons last September, Washington said that it would withdraw nuclear warheads from the ROK.

A serious obstacle to the plan for turning the Korean peninsula into a nuclear-free zone has now been removed. Regrettably, however, it is not the last of the obstacles. The proposal for converting the Korean peninsula into a nuclear-free zone has a long way to go.

I have in mind Pyongyang's refusal to sign the nuclear safeguards accord with the International Atomic Energy Agency and place its nuclear research facilities under international inspection.

Is there a remote possibility of removing these obstacles in the near future? It is likely.

The North has refused to place its nuclear facilities under inspection on the grounds that there are nuclear weapons in the South. In a statement released on 25 November, the DPRK promised that it will sign the nuclear safeguards accord the moment the United States begins withdrawing nuclear weapons from the Korean peninsula. Thus, Pyongyang no longer has any justification for refusing an international inspection of its nuclear facilities.

The international community would like to verify the DPRK's denial that it is not engaged in developing its own nuclear weapons.

Near East & South Asia

Israel To Recognize All 11 Former Republics

LD2412103891 Moscow TASS in English 1012 GMT
24 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Aleksandr Zhudro]

[Text] Tel Aviv December 24 TASS—Israel plans to recognise all eleven former Soviet republics, which formed the new Commonwealth, as independent states.

A top ranking Israeli official, whose name is not cited by Israeli newspapers, said on Monday this would happen soon after the first step was taken by the United States and other Western powers.

At the same time, Israel shows caution in establishing full diplomatic relations with former republics. "So far, I can only say that Israel is prepared to develop bilateral relations with each of the 11 republics," the same anonymous official emphasises.

"Israel and the Jewish people wish success to the new independent states which now face the difficult problems of national restructuring and social development," Shlomo Avneri, a professor at Jerusalem University, writes in the newspaper JERUSALEM POST, commenting on the establishment of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

"There is no doubt that a considerable part of Israel's foreign policy efforts will be orientated at these new states," observes Avneri, who held the post of Israeli foreign minister general director in the past. "This is explained not in the least by the fact that Jews, who may immigrate to Israel in future, live in these countries," he said.

Bovin Views Union Breakup, Diplomatic Tasks

LD2112090891 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1540 GMT 15 Dec 91

[Interview with Soviet Ambassador to Israel Aleksandr Yevgeniyevich Bovin by unidentified correspondent on 11 December; place not given; from the "International Panorama" program—recorded]

[Text] [Correspondent] Aleksandr Yevgeniyevich, how might improved relations with Israel affect our ties with the Arab world?

[Bovin] I think that, on the whole, a certain cooling will take place inevitably because we are beginning to amend our policy, to bring it into balance. Our Arab friends—of course, I appreciate their agitation—are dissatisfied with that. They are used to some kind of privileged relations. However, I think this will pass gradually. We will defend our state interests there—not Arab, not Jewish interests, but our own. When both come to realize that, then everything will fall into place.

[Correspondent] You are going to Israel as ambassador of what country?

[Bovin] Couldn't you ask me an easier question? I just don't know yet? Events are taking place so quickly. At first, when I was appointed, I was the representative, the ambassador, of the USSR. That's what is written on my pass.

[Correspondent] On your passport?

[Bovin] On my passport, on my pass, and in the decree. It then became the USG, and USG is written on my business cards. It became the Commonwealth of Independent States two days ago; it has not yet become that, but it will become that. I don't know what it will be in three days; there might be something else, different versions. Perhaps it will be the Turkic-Slavonic commonwealth of peoples or the Euro-Asiatic commonwealth of nations, for instance. There may be different versions. I simply don't know. In the end, maybe nothing will be left, except for just Russia.

[Correspondent] Then you'll be ambassador of Russia?

[Bovin] Probably, if the government of Russia agrees to me being its ambassador. That's another question, and it doesn't have an automatic answer.

[Correspondent] As ambassador, do you somehow intend to participate in the fate of Soviet emigrants in Israel?

[Bovin] I don't just somehow intend; it will be one of my functions, for 500,000 of our people are there and should have someone with them to ensure that they stop feeling cut off, repulsed, removed from our country. Of course, that will be a large part of my job.

[Correspondent] Aleksandr Yevgeniyevich, our program wishes you diplomatic success. I hope very much that the journalist in you won't perish.

[Bovin] I hope so, too. All the best.

Soviet Institute To Rebuild Iranian Factory

OW2412004791 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1936 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] In November, the Russian Scientific Research Institute for Metallurgical Plants Engineering (GIPROMEZ) and an Iranian metallurgical plant in the town of Esfahan have signed a contract for the reconstruction of an Iranian blast furnace and converter GIPROMEZ, acting as general consultant, will provide its client with full engineering services from the planning to the operational stage. The rough cost of the modernization project is set at more than \$500 mn [million].

Upon completion of the modernization at some time in 1994, the plant's yearly production will be increased by roughly 500,000 tons. The current production level is 1.9 mn tons a year.

The contract stipulates that GIPROMEZ will provide consulting services in conducting three tenders; two for the purchase of equipment for the converter and blast furnace facilities and the third for construction and installation work. So far, proposals have been received from seven firms Voest-Alpine, Hannes-ann, Han, Tysen, Nippon Steel, Danieli & C SpA, and Azovmash. The firm to supply equipment for the converter facility is to be chosen in February or March. The supplier of blast furnace equipment will be decided in April or May. The tender for selecting a general contractor will be concluded in May.

A Soviet company, Zarubezhchermet, is one of the companies being seriously considered as general contractor. This company has already signed a contract in November for the reconstruction of a similar factory; a contract valued at close to \$10 mn.

Article Examines Middle East Relations

PM1812162191 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian
14 Dec 91 p 4

[Sergey Filatov "Point of View" article as part of a feature under the general heading: "Search for Settlement. Complex Start to Washington Stage of Madrid Near East Peace Conference": "Lesson From Abroad"]

[Text] Against the background of what is happening in our own home, whatever we might call it—be it Union or Commonwealth—Near East affairs are not attracting as much careful attention as in the past. We have enough problems of our own. However, the events unfolding around this region demand literally daily attention, as new elements in the situations which are developing may ultimately lead to qualitatively new political realities.

Just take this week as an example. There have been at least four striking events. First, there was of course the resumption of the peace conference's second stage in Washington. Of course, not everything is progressing smoothly there but, judging by both the Arab and Israeli delegations' statements, they are ready for constructive negotiations. As it is now fashionable to say, the process has gotten under way. And an analysis of its results lies ahead.

The second event was our country's unprecedented vote in the United Nations—where it is to this day still regarded as the USSR—on resolutions concerning various aspects of the Palestinian problem. In previous years we continually voted "for" Palestinian interests, but now only five resolutions gained Soviet approval, and in 11 cases our diplomats abstained. What has happened all of a sudden? Senior officials of the USSR Ministry of External Relations explained to me: This was done to promote the peace conference and to not side with one of its participants, in this case the Palestinians. But the question arises: Does this not represent the first step away from the position of unconditional support for the Palestinian people who are living under occupation? It is impossible to lump together the aggressors and their victims.

The Americans act differently. They patronized Israel in the United Nations, and are continuing to do so showing a commitment to principle. It is a different matter that, for the sake of promoting a peaceful settlement, the United States is using other methods to influence its "strategic ally." Literally a couple of days ago, General A. Ben Nun, commander in chief of the Israeli air force, complained that the United States is not discharging its obligations to maintain his air force's superiority over the Arab ones. So the changes have already affected an area which was earlier "sacred" to the two partners—that of their military cooperation—and this is an important element of the prevailing situation.

Fourth and last, attention has been attracted by the U.S. and Israeli statement that they will participate in the Moscow conference of foreign ministers scheduled for 28-29 January, which will begin preparation for the third

stage of the peace conference despite the situation prevailing in the former USSR. This gesture de facto confirms our country's role in the Near East process.

But let us pose this question: Is the Near East region as important to Moscow as it was before? At that time the explosive situation there was regarded as a direct threat to the Soviet Union's southern borders. But now it is not only that the borders are moving to the north—it should be absolutely clear to the majority of politicians that the threat to national security lies not outside these borders but within them. The stones which are falling down from our dilapidated home are striking its tenants on the head. And if we do have to talk about an external threat, then this should only be in the future tense.

But the most painful problem may emerge here, as in the Near East, at the interface of two religions, two world views—of Judaism and Islam over there, of Slavs and Muslims over here. These two enormous human communities are historical neighbors. They have experienced centuries of enmity and war. Afterward it seemed that they had overcome this tendency, but in fact this was not the case; today they are again consciously or unconsciously beginning to set people against each other for the sole reason that their faiths are different. And here is an interesting fact: Near East affairs and this problem are intrinsically closely linked. I will put it bluntly: To turn away from our old friends, the Palestinians and the other Arab countries, is a shortsighted policy. Ultimately, it may have an effect on the whole Muslim world's relations with Moscow. We have already changed enough guidelines, and the results are, as the saying goes, plain to see. Is this not enough?

Moreover, official Soviet representatives have recently stated: We now have no permanent allies and no permanent adversaries in the world, but there are national and state interests. So let us view the Near East through the prism of these interests. On the one hand there is Israel, with which ties are developing apace. Unfortunately, however, it is largely living off American money, receiving gratis in the eighties, for example, more than \$1 billion each year. And support from that country is hardly possible. On the other hand, there is the Arab world which possesses countless riches and is looking more and more to invest in our economy. The only thing which stops them for the time being is the unpredictable nature of our internal situation. So, from the point of view of national interests, is it more advantageous to strengthen existing ties with the Arabs countries or to do the opposite?

The Near East remains that nerve in international life whose twinges can be felt here. The incipient moves toward a regional settlement are also important because they corroborate the idea which is completely obvious but has not yet reached everybody: Nowadays no problems can be solved by force. The only results would be countless casualties. The only way to resolve contentious issues lies in talks, compromises, and concessions.

Maybe the main significance of the international Near East peace conference for our own home (Union? Commonwealth?) is that it is a graphic example of seeking a way out of a bloody, costly, and—the main point—futile hostility which has lasted almost half a century. If only we could learn this lesson from abroad.

West Europe

UK's Major Telephones Gorbachev 23 Dec

LD2312195591 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1825 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Text] Moscow, 23 Dec (TASS)—A telephone conversation took place today between USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev and British Prime Minister John Major.

During the conversation, Mikhail Gorbachev briefed the prime minister, at his request, on the current stage of transformation of state structures in the country following the decisions made in Alma-Ata at the meeting of leaders of sovereign states. He evaluated the processes taking place as complex ones that require the maximum consolidation of all forces of society. He declared that he sees his task as ensuring the normal development of the political process, observance of constitutional norms, and ensuring social harmony.

Mikhail Gorbachev briefed the British prime minister on his lengthy conversation with President Boris Yeltsin of the Russian Federation, which lasted for more than six hours. Gorbachev announced that both presidents now have an understanding of the common responsibility they bear toward the country and toward the world for ensuring that the process of democratic transformation that began several years ago makes real progress.

Mikhail Gorbachev said that it is his sincere wish that the new Commonwealth should become a viable formation, since at the present stage there are no higher tasks and goals than those of securing the success of reforms and reinforcing harmony in society. He stressed the special need for our foreign partners to ensure the necessary support for the Commonwealth at this difficult stage of its emergence and, in particular, for the efforts of Russia and its leaders, who have assumed the role of a locomotive for democratic transformation.

The USSR president expressed to the British prime minister particular gratitude for the role that the latter has played in recent months in his capacity as coordinator of the "big seven" industrial states in rendering all possible support for economic reform in the Soviet Union.

John Major, for his part, echoed the understanding that the USSR president had stated that it is the common goal of political leaders both in the East and in the West to strengthen and defend the beneficial changes that have taken place recently in the world political situation. The will and the desire is there in the West to help you, Major said. In many respects this is due to gratitude for

what you, as president of the USSR, have done over the past few years, he continued. John Major gave an assurance that the British Government is ready in the coming months to give effective support for the new Commonwealth and, in particular, to the Russian leadership in overcoming the economic difficulties in the winter months by giving aid in the form of food, medicine, and fodder. The prime minister expressed confidence that Mikhail Gorbachev would manage, regardless of his political status, to have an effective and beneficial influence on the development of the situation in the country and in the world. [Moscow TASS in English at 0856 GMT on 24 December in a similar report adds: "He [Gorbachev] also assured the British head of government that the Soviet nuclear arsenal is 'tightly controlled' and that this control would continue to be maintained."]

Further on Phone Conversation

LD2312203191 London PRESS ASSOCIATION in English 1935 GMT 23 Dec 91

[by Chris Moncrieff, PRESS ASSOCIATION political editor]

[Text] President Gorbachev is likely to quit power within the next two days, it was learned tonight. He is understood to have made this plain to the Prime Minister during a 30-minute warm and moving telephone conversation—initiated by Mr. Major—between the two leaders this evening.

There was no confirmation of this part of their conversation in London, but all the indications are that Mr Gorbachev will have left the Kremlin well before the weekend.

However, Mr Gorbachev gave the West the assurance it was seeking when he told the prime minister that nuclear weapons in the former Soviet republics would remain under strict control.

Meanwhile, Mr Major has written to President Boris Yeltsin of Russia, promising him of Britain's "continuing strong support for his policies on political and economic reform". The prime minister also stressed that in the British Government's view "there is a continuity of statehood between Russia and the former USSR and that its international rights and obligations including those under the UN Charter will now be those of Russia". Mr Major also told him: "We regard all treaties and agreements in force to which the UK and the USSR were party as remaining in force upon the renaming of their country as Russia." The implication is that Russia will now take the Soviet Union's seat at the United Nations, to avoid a vacuum at the UN.

Now discussions are moving ahead on the question of British and European Community diplomatic representation in Russia and the other new republics. Relations can exist without a diplomatic mission. But it is likely that Britain's present embassy in Moscow will become the embassy to Russia, with the consulate-general in

Kiev upgraded as a full-dress embassy in the Ukraine. Kazakhstan seems another probable place for an embassy. As for the others, discussions will take place and there may be shared missions in some of them with the EC—or the British mission in Moscow may also cover other republics as well.

Mr Gorbachev, when he spoke to the prime minister, did not appear bitter about what most people now regard as his imminent departure from office. The men exchanged warm compliments and Mr Major told him: "You and Raisa have secured a special place in the hearts of the British people."

President Gorbachev said he had spoken "at great length" today to President Yeltsin. He stressed he was convinced that "we must all do our best to support the Commonwealth (of former Soviet republics) and to support Russia".

Mr Gorbachev also reassured the prime minister that there were "strict controls of nuclear weapons", adding that "this would remain the case". He also thanked Mr Major for his help as chairman of the G-7 group of industrialised nations and for his personal friendship.

Mr Gorbachev went on to talk about the need for Western assistance, including animal feedstuffs, medicine and money. He told Mr Major this was needed to support the reform process which he had started and which the prime minister had supported so well during his G-7 chairmanship.

Mr Major paid tribute to President Gorbachev's achievements and told him there was no doubt that he and Raisa had secured a special place in the hearts of the British people. He also promised Mr Gorbachev he would continue to support the reform process during its difficult transitional period.

Mr Gorbachev said he and Raisa wished to pass on their thanks to the prime minister and Mrs Major, particularly for her reaction to their plight during the Kremlin coup in August and also when the Majors went to Moscow in the autumn. They would remember that with great affection.

Major Reassured on Nuclear Controls

*OW2312215191 Moscow INTERFAX in English
2046 GMT 23 Dec 91*

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] "I will announce my decision within the next couple of days," Mikhail Gorbachev told British Prime Minister, John Major, in a telephone conversation on Monday [23 December] evening.

To have his brief telephone conversation with Mr. Major, the Soviet president interrupted his talks with Russian President Boris Yeltsin which were held in the Kremlin and lasted for about eight hours.

At the request of the British Prime Minister, Mikhail Gorbachev informed him about the current stage of restructuring of the state system in the context of the decisions taken by the heads of the sovereign states in Alma-Ata. Mr. Gorbachev described the current situation in the former Soviet Union as complicated and said that the on-going restructuring demanded a strong consolidation of all forces, noting that he considered it his duty to ensure the implementation of the constitutional norms and the attainment of social accord.

He also informed the British prime minister of the talks with Boris Yeltsin and said that both of them had the same understanding of their responsibility for social stability in the former Soviet Union.

Mikhail Gorbachev also urged the foreign partners to give their backing to the independent states, particularly to Russia and its leaders who "have assumed the role of locomotive in the most large-scale social and political transformations ever tackled in this country".

"You should have the least fears about control over nuclear weapons," he said. He also assured Mr. Major that the Soviet nuclear armaments had been put under reliable control.

On his part, Mr. Major supported Mikhail Gorbachev's idea that it was the common goal of the world politicians to support the states which formerly constituted the Soviet Union. The West is willing to help you, he said. This understanding is largely due to the role which you have been playing in recent years as the Soviet president. On behalf of the British government, Mr. Major assured Mikhail Gorbachev that Britain was ready to give efficient assistance to the sovereign republics located in the territory of the USSR, including supplies of medicines and food. He expressed confidence that whatever function Mr. Gorbachev would choose for himself in the future, he would continue to exert strong and beneficial influence on the world in the interests of his people and international stability.

Mr. Major invited Mikhail Gorbachev and his wife to visit Britain in any capacity.

EC Members Welcome Commonwealth Decision

*LD2412120391 Moscow TASS in English 1035 GMT
24 Dec 91*

[By TASS correspondent Yevgeniy Kleshkov]

[Text] The Hague December 24 (TASS)—The European Community and its members welcome the decision, made by participants in the Alma-Ata meeting, to establish a Commonwealth of Independent States.

In this connection the Community notes that the international rights and obligations of the former Soviet Union, including those recorded in the United Nations Charter, will continue to be exercised by Russia, says an

EC statement on the future status of Russia and other republics of the former Soviet Union.

The statement was circulated here and in Brussels on Monday [23 December] at the close of the EC foreign ministers' meeting dealing with the consideration of the situation on the territory of the former USSR.

The European Community and its member-states welcome the Russian Government's acceptance of the above-mentioned commitments and responsibilities and in this capacity will continue their dealings with Russia, taking into account the modifications of her constitutional status, the statement points out.

The community and its members are prepared to recognise other republics of the new commonwealth as soon as it receives assurances from them that they are prepared to comply with the conditions for the recognition of new states in Eastern Europe, the statement says. The conditions were coordinated and decided upon during the EC foreign ministers' meeting on December 16, 1991.

In particular, the EC expects to get guarantees that these republics will continue to fulfil the Soviet Union's international obligations in the part which concerns them, including ratification and full compliance with the treaty on conventional armed forces and armaments in Europe. In addition, they should ensure a single control over the nuclear weapons of the former Soviet Union as well as nuclear non-proliferation.

The EC presiding country will soon apply to the leadership of respective republics of the former Soviet Union to get above-mentioned assurance from them to decide on the question of recognising them from the moment a decision to terminate the existence of the USSR takes effect, the statement emphasises.

Germany Donates 30 Tons of Food to Moscow

*OW2412015191 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1720 GMT 23 Dec 91*

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Germany will not play the role of leader in recognizing the former Union republics' independence and will tackle this problem jointly with the other EC member-states, German Minister for the Affairs of the Family and Elderly People, Mrs. Hannelore Roensch, told IF [INTERFAX]. On Monday [23 December], Mrs. Roensch arrived in Moscow on a Bundeswehr transport plane which brought in 30 tons of food for the population of Moscow and St. Petersburg.

Within the framework of the adopted programmes, Germany will continue to give humanitarian aid to the sovereign republics, said Mrs. Roensch. We expect, however, that the countries located close to the states of the former Union will join in.

Mrs. Roensch also said that by agreement with Russia, 40 German experts, half of them serving in the

Bundeswehr, will arrive in Moscow and St. Petersburg. They will distribute the food to avoid the difficulties experienced previously. Mrs. Roensch noted that before the end of February, Germany would supply the former Soviet republics with food worth 400 million marks.

Latin America & Caribbean

Commentary Criticizes U.S. Position on Cuba

*PY2312213091 Moscow Radio Moscow in Spanish
to Latin America 0000 GMT 21 Dec 91*

[Leonid Levchenko commentary]

[Text] U.S. President George Bush said in a Christmas news conference that he does not consider the possibility of dialoguing with Cuban leader Fidel Castro and that he expects the communist regime in Cuba to be ousted one way or the other. Please listen to Leonid Levchenko's views on the matter.

One would think that with so many important changes now occurring in the world, U.S.-Cuban relations (?should no longer be) those of a cold war process. The U.S. Administration's refusal to recognize the current Cuban regime is based on the belief that Cuba must occupy a position among the democratic nations of the Western Hemisphere. In Havana, however, the situation is different. Quoting Fidel Castro, Cubans are ready for all sorts of sacrifice in order to maintain their socialist system and their independence.

It must be said that this confrontation, which is based more on ideological differences than on common sense, creates a dangerous tension in the region. As a result, the Latin American neighbors are closely watching U.S.-Cuban relations.

In a recent meeting of Rio Group presidents in Cartagena de la India, Colombia, the Latin American countries as a whole determined their position on Cuba without U.S. participation for the first time. The Rio Group (?wants) Cuba to rejoin the inter-American system, to democratize its political life, and to adopt a market economy in the country. The Rio Group offered to help Cuba establish justice, freedom, democracy, respect for human rights, and free economic development on the island.

The Rio Group again asserted its decision to continue respecting the principle of noninterference in the domestic affairs of other states. While Washington rejects any type of talks with Fidel Castro, the Rio Group has called for a renewed dialogue between Cuba and all other countries of the continent. This formula implies a discreet call to the United States urging it to change its negative position on Havana.

Currently, Washington is not willing to suspend its economic blockade of Cuba, which is facing an extremely difficult situation since the former Soviet Union considerably reduced its supply of oil and other

staples to the island, and is confident that these difficulties will create a social outburst in Cuba.

In an article published in THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR, (Raymond Duncan), a political science professor at New York State University, disapproves of the U.S. Administration's position. The political science professor asks: Why adopt such an attitude, force the Cubans' standard of living to go down, and risk bloodshed when we can adopt a policy that will allow the

transition to democracy to be conducted more smoothly? Why doesn't the United States use its influence to obtain real changes in the policies of Castro's regime by improving the standard of living of common Cubans and thus, contribute to a deeper friendship among the countries of the Western Hemisphere? Is it not time to normalize our relations with Cuba?

Our commentator also asks the same questions.

Supreme Soviet

Statement on Commonwealth Formation Issued

PM1912123191 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian
19 Dec 91 p 2

["Statement by USSR Supreme Soviet of the Republics"—PRAVDA headline]

[Text] As the result of a comprehensive exchange of opinions and an assessment of the political situation in the country, the USSR Supreme Soviet of the Republics comprising deputations of the sovereign states declares:

1. The Soviet of the Republics perceives with understanding the agreement of the Republic of Belarus, the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic, and Ukraine on the creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States and deems it a real guarantee of emergence from the very acute political and economic crisis.
2. The Soviet of the Republics regards as an important constructive step the meeting of the heads of the republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenia, and Uzbekistan in the city of Ashkhabad, which stated the positive nature of the Minsk initiative and expressed a desire to coordinate efforts in forming the commonwealth on the basis of its members' equality of rights.
3. The Soviet of the Republics voices hope that the process of forming and strengthening the Commonwealth of Independent States and their legal succession in the interests of their peoples and of ensuring human rights—a process begun by the said agreement—will be vigorously continued with the personal participation of the heads of all the sovereign states.
4. The Soviet of the Republics believes that the transition from Union statehood to a Commonwealth of Independent States and legal succession in the activity of the USSR Supreme Soviet and of the commonwealth's coordinating institutions must be implemented only on a legal basis. Anticonstitutional actions in respect of the USSR Supreme Soviet and the USSR president are inadmissible.

Council of Nationalities Meeting Announced

LD2312140591 Moscow TASS International Service
in Russian 1320 GMT 23 Dec 91

[By TASS parliamentary correspondent Nikolay Zheleznov]

[Text] Moscow, 23 Dec (TASS)—Despite the decision adopted by the leaders of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet on the transfer of property of the USSR Supreme Soviet to Russian jurisdiction, the Union parliament is not discontinuing its work. Valentin Kulikov, acting head of the USSR Supreme Soviet press center, said that on 24 December a session of the Council of Nationalities will be held in the Kremlin, to which members of the Council of the Union, which lacks a

quorum because of the recall of Russian deputies from the Union parliament, are also invited.

Anuarbek Alimzhanov, chairman of the Council of Nationalities did not give a clear agenda for the forthcoming sitting of the Union parliament—"One of the last, but not the last," as he said. He considers that most probably the deputies will be exchanging opinions on the documents adopted in Alma-Ata, as well as examining the question of the procedure for ceding representative authority in the country to some kind of appropriate body of the Commonwealth, whose status, evidently, will be determined in Minsk on 30 December. Only after this, in the opinion of the chairmen of the upper chamber of the Union parliament, can an act on denouncement of the treaty on the USSR be adopted at the last sitting of the Supreme Soviet, and the self-dissolution of the Union parliament be declared.

Session Begins; Deputies To Consider Resolution

LD2412103591 Moscow TASS International Service
in Russian 0938 GMT 24 Dec 91

[By TASS parliamentary correspondent Ivan Novikov]

[Text] Moscow, 24 Dec (TASS)—The USSR Supreme Soviet began what will probably be its final sitting today in the Kremlin. It looks as if the deputies will not be able to even adopt the draft resolution "On the Right of Succession and on the Bodies of State Power and Administration of the Former USSR in Connection with the Creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States," which was drawn up on the heels of the Minsk accords.

One of the clauses in this resolution envisages that the USSR Supreme Soviet shall retain its powers until the Commonwealth of Independent States members establish a new representative body or, alternatively, that the Commonwealth shall have a single-chamber parliament, similar to the Soviet of the Republics. But evidently this will no longer be decided in Moscow but in Minsk, where the leaders of the independent states will gather at the end of December.

Speaker Supports Act of Dissolution

LD2412144291 Moscow Radio Moscow World Service
in English 1300 GMT 24 Dec 91

[Text] The Soviet parliament is holding a meeting today in Moscow attended by representatives of both the upper and the lower houses. Addressing the deputies with an introductory word, the speaker of the upper house, Anuarbek Alimzhanov, said parliament must pass an act on the dissolution of the Soviet Union in line with a (?will) of 11 former Soviet republics which signed an agreement on the creation of a Commonwealth of Independent States. He also said the deputies must adopt a document determining the community as the Soviet Union's legal successor. Thus a qualitatively new stage in the country's development will be put on a civilized basis.

Anuarbek Alimzhanov pointed out that the Commonwealth of Independent States emerged in a difficult period of crisis and the breaking of ties between the republics. He expressed hope that the creation of the new community would make it possible to stop this disastrous process.

Supreme Soviet To Continue To Exist

AU2412103691 Paris AFP in English 1006 GMT
24 Dec 91

[Text] Moscow, Dec 24 (AFP)—The Supreme Soviet, parliament of the ex-Soviet Union, held a session here Tuesday [24 December] but refused to dissolve itself until all the republican parliaments had ratified the accord creating the new Commonwealth of Independent States.

A draft resolution along these lines was outlined to a small number of deputies who gathered for the session by Anuarbek Alimzhanov, speaker of the Soviet of the Republics, the parliament's upper house.

"The Supreme Soviet will continue to exist until all the parliaments of the member republics of the CIS have ratified the Alma Ata accord" of last Saturday [21 December] which set up the CIS of 11 republics, said Alimzhanov.

Turning to journalists in the hall, he stressed: "No, this is not the last session of the Supreme Soviet."

He did not specify whether Mikhail Gorbachev, president of the former Soviet Union, backed this position. He neither confirmed nor denied rumours that Gorbachev might announce his resignation to the current parliamentary session.

"After ratification by all the parliaments, the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union could consider decreeing the end of the Soviet Union and its own extinction," Alimzhanov said.

The parliament, meeting in the Kremlin hall where the Communist Party Central Committee used to meet, was decorated by the hammer and sickle and the flags of only seven republics.

"What is happening now is not a comedy, it is perhaps a tragedy," said Alimzhanov. "We must be vigilant at a time when the struggle for power is paramount, as in Georgia" where the president is currently under armed attack from the opposition.

Further on Proceedings

LD2412130291 Moscow All-Union Radio Mayak
Network in Russian 1230 GMT 24 Dec 91

[Text] As we have already told our listeners today, the USSR Supreme Soviet has held a session at which the question of the legal succession to the USSR and the Union bodies of state power and administration were discussed in connection with the formation of the Commonwealth of Independent States. I will say right away that following an exchange

of opinions at this session, which lasted about two hours, it was decided to meet again in order to adopt final documents. It is not impossible that the USSR president will be invited to that session.

The speeches at the session today were greatly varied. On the whole, the deputies recognized the reality of the political situation in the country, and the necessity of the transition to the new realities. However, there were also speeches such as that by Deputy Nosov; who stated very categorically that the heads of the sovereign states have been led on by the capitalist sharks, and that only a congress can adopt any decisions about the further existence of our state, and can do so only on Leninist principles.

Be that as it may, it is expected that by the end of today, or at least tomorrow morning, a final decision will be made about when the final session of the USSR Supreme Soviet will be held.

Lubchenko Cited on Surveillance of Deputies

PM2312141591 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian
21 Dec 91 p 2

["Own Information" report: "Apologies Made"]

[Text] In connection with the violation of the constitutional rights of USSR people's deputies perpetrated by several representatives of the Russian administration, K. Lubchenko, chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet of the Union, has issued a statement.

The statement says in particular: "Representatives of the RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] guard department who placed under guard the official premises of the USSR Supreme Soviet undertook personal surveillance of USSR people's deputies and apparatus workers. There are rumors that these actions are being implemented at my instructions.

"I categorically deny these rumors and believe that the actions of the guard staffers violated the status of a USSR people's deputy and the rights of citizens.

"At a session of the liquidation committee its chairman, N.T. Ryabov, and I gave a legal assessment of this situation. The commission guarantees that such actions will not be allowed in future and apologizes for the incidents which have taken place."

In a talk with our correspondent, A. Alimzhanov, chairman of the Soviet of the Republics of the country's parliament, also expressed extreme concern at instances of illegal actions against members of that chamber. In particular the office of V. Golovnev, deputy chairman of the Soviet of the Republics, was sealed in his absence. These instances are assessed as intolerable strong-arm pressure on USSR people's deputies impeding their work.

It has become known that on 24 December it is planned to hold another session of the Soviet of the Republics. On the same day there will be a meeting of USSR people's deputies at the Soviet of the Union.

Political & Social**Further Reportage on Gorbachev-Yeltsin Meeting****Yakovlev Participates in Talks**

LD2312203891 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1900 GMT 23 Dec 91

[From the "TV Inform" newscast]

[Excerpts] A meeting between Mikhail Gorbachev and Boris Yeltsin began at 1200 today. Aleksandr Yakovlev joined the conversation one hour later. At 1800 the discussions were interrupted by a telephone conversation with British Prime Minister Major. [passage omitted]

The conversation ended with Gorbachev saying that it is not easy for Yeltsin at present. Let us help him here and you help him there. The issue of giving assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States by providing foodstuffs and medicines was discussed during the telephone conversation.

Yeltsin Briefs Gorbachev on Alma-Ata

LD2312190191 Moscow All-Union Radio Mayak Network in Russian 1730 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Text] [Announcer] And now for events linked most directly to the Alma-Ata meeting. The results of the meeting are being widely discussed, both on the territory of the former USSR and beyond its borders. We will talk about world reaction later on in our program. In the meantime, let us look at what has taken place in our own country today.

As we have already reported, a meeting between USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev and Russian President Boris Yeltsin took place...[corrects himself] began in the middle of the day. Contradictory information is coming in. TASS has carried a report that the meeting took place, although it could be expected that the main topics were the interpretation of the results of the Alma-Ata meeting and the procedure for transferring control over nuclear weapons. The press service of the country's president gave assurances that more detailed information is expected. But our political observer Yuliy Semenov has just come into the studio and he evidently has some new details. Please go ahead.

[Semenov] Let us explain the kind of hesitancy in your delivery of this news. It is indeed characteristic of journalists to always hurry along events in some way. Perhaps it has to do with human nature. There were assumptions that today's meeting between the two presidents could turn out to be relatively short, being a kind of formal one, and it was even expected that afterward there would be a statement by Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev on his resignation. But you were right in correcting your statement that it did not take place but rather began at 1200; according to the information I have managed to get, which is still unofficial, the meeting continued for six hours.

Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin informed Gorbachev—President Gorbachev—in detail about the course and results of the meeting of the leaders of the 11 states in Alma-Ata. Then there was a discussion on ways of further forming the Commonwealth, overcoming some difficulties and problems that are arising or which are not yet clear, and—as I was told unofficially—making the Commonwealth viable. That is how it was worded.

Then there was an unexpected break in the meeting. A fairly lengthy conversation took place between President Gorbachev and John Major, prime minister of Great Britain, as the leader of the Group of Seven Western powers.

[Announcer] The chairman of the Seven this year.

[Semenov] Yes, I simply said leader for the sake of brevity, yes. The duty leader, let us put it that way. The British prime minister was informed about the contents of the conversation and the common concerns of the presidents. During the conversation with him the need for outside support for the new Commonwealth was stressed. What I would particularly like to draw attention to—if the information that I have is confirmed—is that they drew the attention of their British interlocutor particularly to the need to support the leadership of Russia which, as President Gorbachev put it, has taken upon itself the role of locomotive in the process of forming the union of independent states.

At the same time gratitude was expressed to the Seven, represented by Major, for the aid that is being given. The British prime minister, on his part, expressed his willingness to continue to maintain the position of support for the Commonwealth.

[Announcer] And then the meeting between the two presidents continued?

[Semenov] It continued, yes. But I would like to mention another aspect of the telephone conversation with the British prime minister which is relevant to our internal affairs. Concerning his future, Gorbachev told his interlocutor that he will announce his decision in the next two days. The meeting then continued, but evidently we will yet receive more, and official, information.

[Announcer] Well indeed, let us wait for the final information. I thank Yuliy Semenov for that account of the intermediate results—let us put it that way—of the meeting between the president of the USSR and the president of Russia.

Further on Meeting

OW2312191191 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1825 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The conference of the staff of Mikhail Gorbachev's apparatus, scheduled for the afternoon, December 23, has been put off in view of the prolonged

meeting between Mikhail Gorbachev and Boris Yeltsin which was also attended by Aleksandr Yakovlev.

According to unconfirmed information, decrees signed by the presidents of the USSR and Russia on the elimination of the main leading bodies of the former Union may be made public on Monday [23 December].

As is clear from trustworthy sources, Boris Yeltsin has already given orders concerning the Soviet president's financial position after his resignation.

Gorbachev Holds Farewell Meeting With Staff

LD2412111191 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1100 GMT 24 Dec 91

[Excerpt] One more important event is under way in the Kremlin now. According to RIA, Mikhail Gorbachev, completing his activity in the post of USSR president, is holding a farewell meeting with workers on his staff. [passage omitted]

Gorbachev Says Commonwealth Not To Survive

AU2412092891 Rome ANSA in English 0818 GMT 24 Dec 91

[Text] (ANSA) Rome, December 23 - the Soviet people do not understand the changes that are taking place, President Mikhail Gorbachev said today, adding that he does not believe in the new Commonwealth of Independent States, which will not survive for long.

In an interview to Italian public radio, Gorbachev said: "The most serious problem is that the people do not understand what is happening, they are unaware. We were united and now we are divided and I think this process will not stop. I do not feel at ease with the partisans of the new Commonwealth."

He also said: "I do not believe in the new Commonwealth, I don't think it will be able to survive or to create coordination mechanisms. I think it will lack agreement and institutions will not function regularly."

He also reiterated he still has control over the former Soviet Union's nuclear arsenal.

"I don't think the situation will stabilize by the end of this year, but we need clarification," he continued, adding: "[words indistinct] (?consider) the situation very seriously because when new borders, territories and property are established grave new problems will arise."

He also criticized those leaders and "colleagues, who do not follow legitimate constitutional order," commenting that "ordinary people have the feeling that a plot without tanks is taking place. I cannot say that this is a coup, I am only saying that the transition process must follow the Constitution."

Gorbachev said he told Russian president Boris Yeltsin and other Commonwealth leaders: "If you are democratic, if you are authentic reformists, then you must

always act according to the law and the rules, otherwise the people will ask themselves whether you are common crooks.

"Is it not significant," he added, "that the new protagonists are not accounting to anyone? Is it not shameful for our democratic process?"

He insisted that the Supreme Soviet should meet one last time and that it only can declare the end of the Soviet Union and reiterated his proposal for a popular referendum "to decide the country's destiny."

He stressed that he does not want to hinder the changes taking place, which he said "will be painful and will have (?moods) of acute reactions," and commented that "we must act in a very responsible manner because the fate of millions is at stake."

The "juridical inheritance" of the Soviet Union must remain in the hands of the Supreme Soviet for the time being, he said.

He also admitted he "lost precious time" for which he paid a high price and that he "missed the train at the right time."

Everything possible must be done to prevent mass resentment and a backlash against reforms, he concluded: "We must do everything calmly... But this does not mean the movement should only [words indistinct] opposition" to the establishment.

Gorbachev Delivers 'Farewell Interview'

LD2412060591 Moscow All-Union Radio Mayak Network in Russian 0430 GMT 24 Dec 91

[Press review]

[Text] I want to start the review with MOSKOVSKAYA PRAVDA and the republican PRAVDA, with the USSR president's interview with the newspaper's correspondent. This is evidently a farewell interview, the newspaper writes. It is hard not to agree with Yeltsin's television statement that, as established in a normal, civilized state, an anathema like the former leader will never be handed on again in this country. Such an assertion is a good sign. Now is not the time when the press is mobilized in defense of my name, Mikhail Sergeyevich said in the interview. I am not reproaching people who are not to blame. It is a hard life; there is a food shortage and the threat of unemployment and endless lines. All this evokes animosity everywhere with regard to Gorbachev and those with him, impartial words directed at them. For all that, Mikhail Sergeyevich expressed the conviction that people understand that the country has chosen the right path. It is simply necessary to understand that there is a difficult winter and summer ahead, and further on things will get easier. It will then become clear what all the sacrifices were for. It will become interesting to read the newspapers and listen to the radio, not only to watch entertainment programs but

also to take an interest in life around us. I know, the president said, that this time will soon come.

Gorbachev Interviewed: 'Not Farewell'

PM2412123191 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA
PRAVDA in Russian 24 Dec 91 pp 1-2

[Interview with USSR President M.S. Gorbachev by D. Muratov and V. Fronin; interview is datelined 17-23 December, place not specified: "Gorbachev Goes, But Remains. Interview With USSR's First and Last President"; first two paragraphs are introduction]

[Text] Let us agree straightaway that this conversation with President Gorbachev is not a farewell to Mikhail Gorbachev. In our preface we will not list the milestones on his path, the posts he has held, his mistakes and actions. Gorbachev has not managed to improve people's everyday lives, but he has changed people themselves. That is both his drama and his contribution.

He has not been able to provide sausages; on the other hand he knew how to provide freedom. If anyone is confident that the former is more important, he will hardly have both. An intelligent member of his entourage said very precisely: "He has ceased to be a ruler and is becoming a politician. He will no longer be able to rule, but he will undoubtedly be able to influence many things."

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] Mikhail Sergeyevich, hello. Could you show us your identification, please.

[Gorbachev] The president does have identification.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] Who signed it, Mikhail Sergeyevich?

[Gorbachev] Revenko. The head of the apparatus.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] This is the new one?

[Gorbachev] Yes, it is.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] Valid...

[Gorbachev] It's valid for the time being. Since the Commonwealth has already been set up, let everything be constitutional; the incumbent institutions of power will be abolished by the last session of the USSR Supreme Soviet.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] How much does the great burden that you carry weigh?

[Gorbachev] Are you talking about the "little box" or, as it is known, the "briefcase"? (Gorbachev weighs in the palm of his hand his secretary's bleeper.) Roughly the same as this.

(We tried it out—it weighed 1.5 kg. Our conversation took place 18 December, the "button" was somewhere near us, and Gorbachev said "It is with me all the time;")

yet 20 December in Italy, Boris Nikolayevich said that it would be transferred to a unified strategic command. To whom?)

...But this little box is not the chief burden. I am constantly being asked whether I am a happy man, and I have said that my life's main work has come to fruition, but such a burning stream of events is now passing over me, passing over all of us, scorching us more and more. Of course, I still do not think that we are entirely aware, either as a whole or individually, that we were one country and now we are divided. Our attitude must change! But once upon a time there was a man, things went badly for him, he lost his point of support, he did not give a damn about anything, and he decided to start afresh, to leave. He got up and flew off to friends at the other end of the country, to the countryside... Yet now he will be dependent not on your decision but on someone else's permission. We were not, after all, conscious of the administrative borders between the republics and autonomous entities in our country. But the most difficult process has begun now—the transformation of administrative borders into state borders. These are very dangerous transactions. Very dangerous turns of events.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] Your long-standing rival in the USSR Supreme Soviet chairmanship elections, A.M. Obolenskiy, has described current events not as a "turn" [povorot] but as a coup d'etat [gosudarstvennyy perevorot]. Although since Belovezhskaya Forest, we think that people have some hope of clarity.

[Gorbachev] I will not say that this is a coup d'etat, I would not go that far. The Union is being transformed into a Commonwealth. Naturally, the Union had its own structures and the Commonwealth will have its own operating mechanisms. There is nothing unnatural or supernatural in that. Since one system is being replaced by another, say, it has its own features, its own laws of development and existence. That's all OK. But how are we to switch to that? To be frank, I have spent all my time reining in my colleagues to prevent them exceeding the bounds of the Constitution, exceeding the bounds of the rule-of-law approach. That's very important. Since people have even got the impression, as you said, that this is a kind of coup, only without the tanks. I told Boris Nikolayevich yesterday (17 December—Editorial Note): If you are real democrats, if you favor reforms, if you are heading for a rule-of-law state—I will not list all your aims—you must do everything on the basis of democratic values and democratic rules.

The complexion of this Commonwealth is now emerging, preparatory work is under way for the new structures. That is natural. But this is not a painless process and it is provoking an acute reaction. When the Commonwealth is finalized in Alma-Ata and the agreement is signed, it will have reached its crucial stage. The final session of the Supreme Soviet must be held after instruments of ratification are exchanged. I consider this absolutely essential, simply... absolutely. The Supreme Soviet is to record the end of the Union's existence and,

on the basis of all the documents adopted by the Commonwealth's cofounders, it is to open the way to another life, another era in the life of these peoples and states. I do not want to complicate the process since this is the republics' choice. I simply want to be entirely consistent and say that this is the people's business. This is not Fronin's business or Gorbachev's business or Dmitriy's business, he is even younger—it is the business of all of us. Incidentally, it is also the business of those generations who came before us.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] Interviews with you are "out of date" in a flash. A host of events are occurring, life is changing, and we think that your viewpoint is also changing. Your stance has already become fairer [loyalneye], softer...

[Gorbachev] No, that's not entirely accurate. I said: "I am not taking part." But as a politician—and any politician can be deemed a politician if he sees realities and responds to them—I will respect that process. Moreover, I want it to be successful. I have even said on three occasions: For God's sake let it be successful... My fundamental stance has not changed on this. I am in favor of a state. But I will make use of my opportunities and somehow help to ensure that something living comes out of this process rather than another abortion. Something viable must emerge.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] You have talked about your presidential powers, you recently gave everyone a fright in TIME magazine with what you said about using your powers as commander in chief.

[Gorbachev] What are you talking about? I said at a meeting with the military and I will say it now: No one, no one has the right to "play" the army card. I said that as long as I am commander in chief I will do everything to ensure that the army ensures stability and security and does not become a factor in a lottery. I am sure that a military coup is impossible; the people would not accept it and the army would not agree to it. The only danger is from the street. If dissatisfied people come out onto the street and political prostitutes and speculators spur them on.

(Presidential Press Secretary Andrey Grachev: "The Gorbachev quote from the TIME interview was garbled in our newspapers. There was not even a hint of the use of military force.")

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] What will happen to you?

[Gorbachev] Everything will end in Alma-Ata and I will await your telephone call announcing the president's fate.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] Here is a difficult question for you. Your political career was, regrettably, constantly linked with a sequence of betrayals by your colleagues. And there was the letter from the Leningrad chemist that appeared in your absence...

[Gorbachev] Pardon?

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] Nina Andreyeva.

[Gorbachev] Yes.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] ...And the emergency powers requested behind the president's back for Prime Minister Pavlov and the party's financial affairs of which, according to you, the general secretary was unaware... Of course, without Kryuchkov's knowledge the "Alfa" group would not have stormed the Vilnius television center or blown up the television power unit in Baku, and you were also unaware of the actions taken by your closest comrade-in-arms... Were you deceiving us or were you deceived?

[Gorbachev] You have asked a difficult question. Well, let us call a spade a spade. I was aware that the planned reforms would affect many people. I was aware that many people would have to make sacrifices and often change tactics in order for the country and the people to change and for the reforms not to be hindered at the very first stage.

Everyone thought—Well, Gorbachev is a conservative, but I could see that we had been advancing slogans for two years, while 100 km from Moscow all was quiet. But remember the Central Committee's January plenum (the "cadre" plenum of 1987), how sharp and intense it was. This was the first time that we had had extremely serious analysis and serious assessments... But it was a monolith! Powerful structures do not accept any movement. Thus, if we don't "kick start" the process from below, everything is doomed. Just as many attempts to reform our state were doomed. We can recall how many attempts there have been in our memory. As soon as it came to the position of the party, to the—real—role played by the people in electing the authorities, everything ended, inasmuch as the most important thing was at issue... The ruling party class was once again acting on behalf of the people.

It was then, at the 19th party conference that we began talking about separating legislative, executive, and judicial power and about restoring to the party its natural role—the role of a political organization. We started speaking then about pluralism of opinions, but political pluralism was still to come...

Here now is the crux of my reply to your question. We touched many interests, and what did we see?—a confrontation began between the party nomenklatura, the state structures, the military-industrial complex, and simply people dedicated to the old values and the old ideology. I saw all this! It was not seen by those who did not wish to see it. Starting with the Russian congress of the Communist Party, a struggle was waged for a whole year, this time to the death. They were now real people, devoted to the conservatives, and they traveled about the cities and villages, preparing protests and rallying groups of party members. And all this came to the general secretary's desk, accusations everywhere that he was betraying now the left, now the right. What was I to do? I was being subjected to colossal attacks and pressure. I

had to decide what to do. It seemed the normal thing to engage in a decisive battle. But there was still no popular support, society was not yet ready, and discontent was ripening within the party itself. Therefore, giving rise to very harsh rebukes, we decided first to renew the strongest structures. You will recall the renewed Central Committee and the renewal of the "set" of secretaries; and oblast party committees and secretaries were renewed three times. And then free elections. Despite all their problems, they lifted the people. And I endeavored to drag things out as long as I could, I delayed to the last so that no one could halt the country which had surged ahead. Do you think I did not know that the party's conservative circles, which had united with the military-industrial complex, would make a strike? I knew, and I kept them beside me. Perhaps this explains a great deal in your question...

But they procrastinated too, also afraid that the people would not follow them, and they waited for the people's discontent. But suddenly there was the Union Treaty. Hope of stabilizing the country, in which they would no longer find a place for themselves. Look! Chairs had already been lined up in the Kremlin, with the republics in alphabetical order and each one's banner at the back, and here was the president's table. The president made a speech—that's it, I had already confirmed the procedure... The typeface had been chosen for the treaty, and everything had been decided. And they saw that the last moment had come.

I will tell you: If they had acted 12 or 18 months ago the way they did in August, it would all have come off. It is worth realizing this.

Therefore, as they say, work proceeded "in camp." Incidentally, this explains why I did not take my final leave of the post of general secretary, which, in general, had me by the throat. Everyone was clinging on, everyone, even representatives of the democratic movements...

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] ...There is a good cartoon of you. Gorbachev is walking along a wire, carrying two baskets, one on the right and one on the left. Left-wingers are sitting in one, right-wingers in the other. Some are saying "Just a little to the left," while the right-wingers are shouting "Just a little to the right..." And yet one of your mistakes was that you did not unite with the democratic forces in time and did not together mount an offensive at the time...

[Gorbachev] At a certain stage I failed to seize the moment. It is not only the direction and not only the stage that is very important in politics but also the moment. Here, as in any battle. Because, in general, under the pressure of the situation I should already have created a strong alliance with the democrats. In February there were these rallies and the troops. The threat of dictatorship was already arising. I saw the danger realistically. And then I at once proposed that the leaders of the republics meet at Novo-Ogarevo...

The December Congress of People's Deputies debated whether to include on the agenda the question of the president and his report. And Anatoliy Ivanovich [Lukyanov] engaged in such maneuvering over the formulation of this question as to irritate the people. I could see, for I was sitting beside him. I said: What are you doing, and for what purpose? It was all murk, some kind of murk, in order to raise the temperature to white heat. This was all a deliberate action to put pressure on the president. I should have understood everything sooner, I believe, in the fall of 1990. It was right then that I should have sought forms of cooperation, or at least held a roundtable, meetings... That time was lost. And, in general, it cost us dearly... But still we managed to embark on the Novo-Ogarevo process!

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] You have won and lost at the same time. The liquidation commission of the Supreme Soviet includes in its plans the "sealing" of the president's seat. Will you be in opposition to the new power?

[Gorbachev] For me this is a question that I think about constantly.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] Having ended up with the democrats after the putsch, you are not with them now.

[Gorbachev] And yet I cannot now cast doubt on the fact that some have begun changing course, getting away from democratic transformations... This remains. Incidentally, Boris Nikolayevich and I have also touched on this question... It seemed to him that the Movement for Democratic Reforms [MDR] is being transformed into an opposition party... I do not understand it this way. I have behaved myself all the time. I have spoken with Shevardnadze, Popov, and Yakovlev. The thing is that the democrats must not ignore or fail to assess what jeopardizes democratic values. So that the trends toward unlawful methods which were manifested at the initial stage do not become dominant. This is the first point.

Second, the leaders of the MDR insist and emphasize that the radicalization of economic reforms must be thought out and considered in the best possible way, so as not to put society in a position which would make it oppose the reforms. And when one of the speakers proposed proclaiming the MDR an opposition movement, both Yakovlev and Shevardnadze reasonably said to him: You know, our movement embraces all the republics, and if some dictatorial, antidemocratic trends have become apparent in one republic, the movement must come out against this there. But this does not mean that the entire movement must at once be geared to opposition positions. I believe that their position is one of constructive cooperation, including support for everything positive that is being done and criticism of what inspires apprehension.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] And yet we did not understand. Do you feel yourself to be an opposition politician or not?

[Gorbachev] No, although I do not believe in this concept of the Commonwealth. But given that the republics have left, I cannot, do not consider it possible in today's highly complex situation in society to oppose these concepts to the point of splitting society. That, you know, would be to feast during a time of plague.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] Bek describes in "The New Appointment" an ailment called "interference"—a conflict between an individual's inner state and the need to carry out one's functional duties. It could seem that you have now described the symptoms of precisely that ailment.

[Gorbachev] I am, nevertheless, you know, not becoming split in two. There are interests which I serve both as a politician and a human being. If the creation of the Commonwealth helps people reach accord, one's pride has to be swallowed.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] There is a feeling in the country that you to some extent fear the creation of the Commonwealth. You yourself once said that the idea of famine and then the idea of catastrophe are being "palmed off" on us, but now similar inflections have appeared in you...

[Gorbachev] Frankly, this has not been the case with me, and I have no wish to frighten anyone today. But I must talk about the dangers, must I not? Specifically about the dangers. I think that the greatest dangers are linked to two factors.

The dismemberment of the country.

And the elucidation of questions of citizenship.

Can you imagine movement restricted by borders and passports in a world where 75 million people live outside their native land. That is what I had in mind when I said that we would be putting terrible bombs in place.

And I also said to Boris Nikolayevich: Russia, under your influence, was the first to recognize the Balts and conclude agreements with them. And everything regarding citizenship seemed to be properly enshrined. But now we converse with Baker, and he is at a loss—what the devil is happening. Second-class citizens have appeared.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] ...Freedom has arrived, and with it the first arrests too...

[Gorbachev] ...Or they gave assurances: Yes, we will agree on everything... about the troops, what the withdrawal deadline will be, the stages, and so forth. But what do we hear now? Clear out. No more nor less than clear out. The garrisons no longer receive food and you can not go to the stores. I am not trying to frighten anyone—I am only talking about the need to overcome such fears.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] And yet the single ruble is being retained, and Ukraine is not leaving...

[Gorbachev] You will appreciate that it is not yet clear whether this is unification or disunification.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] Marriage for the sake of divorce? Hardly.

[Gorbachev] On the contrary. You know what Burbulis's concept was? A soft center is needed for the independent states to pursue the divorce suit. Here the phenomenon of Ukraine played its part. After all, the treaty process was virtually agreed upon. Apart from Ukraine, there was the agreement of all to sign the treaty. I talked with everyone. Nazarbayev was to give approval at the Supreme Soviet. The Belarussians likewise. And Russia! I had the commission findings on my desk—they were positive ones. They even proposed that there be a common constitution. Ukraine stayed out. Deadlock. Either we had to drag Ukraine out of the deadlock or be dragged into deadlock ourselves?...

I do not know what happened. But as it has, help must be given.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] Returning to the question of betrayals in your life. There was after all, it seems, the possibility of more reliable support for the president. You know, on 25 November 1990 Nina Alekseyeva, a doctor at Vnukovo Airport, recorded the death of a man on whom they found a pipe and 55 rubles. That man was Merab Mamardashvili. He was one of the greatest philosophers of our age. He was your friend. Did you have contact with him in recent years?

[Gorbachev] No, unfortunately. He and Yuriy Levada were my university friends. We even went to visit girls in the same room where my future wife lived. He was a most fascinating man who even then stood out from all of us... He really was an honorable and moral man. It is a pity that our paths diverged after university, but on the anniversary of his death I did spot a small photograph of him somewhere in a newspaper... And Raisa followed his work...

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] If I may put another, delicate question to you. We know that on 27 August, when the putsch was already over, the president's wife burned his personal letters. Did you and she fear for your future?

[Gorbachev] That is certainly not what was involved. The letters were very personal and open. When Raisa Maksimovna began writing notes on the basis of her diary after Foros, I learned that many letters of mine written even before our marriage had been kept... I disclosed in those letters many judgments which I have not repudiated and will not repudiate. Raisa Maksimovna has a sense of a very deep personal relationship to the inner world which binds us together. We are in general against our children giving interviews or having contact with the press. Let the president's family at least remain an intact island to which it is possible to calmly return. I think that she did this solely out of a sense that someone could gain access to this island and poke about

on it if, God forbid, something like August were to be repeated. I came to her and she said: I have burned them all. And she cried.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] Nevertheless Vaclav Havel was right when he said that a president cannot live a normal human life. Mikhail Sergeyevich, an odd question, perhaps even a childish one: Do you have any money in your pocket?

[Gorbachev] In my pocket, no. In my billfold and in my safe, along with certificates, yes. And how not? My daughter has to be helped.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] Mikhail Sergeyevich, do you use the familiar form of address to everyone?

[Gorbachev] At home, yes. Well... That's the way I speak to friends and people whom I respect. Incidentally, when friends of my youth call me, the familiar form is also used. But... I do agree. I think someone has drawn attention to the fact that the president certainly does sometimes "simplify" his form of address too much. That, of course, is a question of upbringing. This tradition came from the Komsomol [All-Union Lenin Communist Youth League]. And it has remained.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] A final question. You have already spoken with many world politicians. How did you approach them?

[Gorbachev] Quite simply: The reforms must be helped. Via the Commonwealth—so, via the Commonwealth. Provided that democracy and the reforms are assisted. I said—and no one could refute me—that we continue to have stricter control over nuclear weapons than even the Americans do. And I felt again that they continue to regard us with respect and interest—these are the fruits of our policy, and we now have someone to lean on...

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] It is clearly now time for us to take our leave...

[Gorbachev] You know, KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA has published positive items on me only twice. In 1950, a photo where, among others, figured Moscow State University student Gorbachev, and then in 1989, you reprinted it.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] Good-bye, Mikhail Sergeyevich. And many thanks—for everything.

Article Blames Gorbachev for 'Chaos'

LD2412121791 Moscow TASS in English
0959 GMT 24 Dec 91

[Text] Moscow December 24 (TASS)—NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA on Tuesday [24 December] published an article under the title "The First and Last Soviet President Goes and So Does the Soviet Union," describing President Mikhail Gorbachev's role in the history of the state.

"Way back in 1985 Gorbachev decided to cure the country with glasnost and democratisation. Even minimal doses of those were enough to kill the patient."

According to the Author Vitaliy Tretiakov, "Gorbachev is definitely to blame."

"Gorbachev induced chaos which destroyed the doomed empire. Trying to kill totalitarianism, he only managed to kill Communism. Trying to impose freedom on the state, he killed the state. Trying to inoculate democracy to the society, he destroyed the society. Wishing to keep the empire intact, he destroyed the empire," Tretiakov wrote.

"Gorbachev became the first Soviet president and had to pay for it by being withdrawn from the post without pity or sorrow of his fellow politicians and the Soviet people," the author said.

Constitutional Compliance Committee Disbands

LD2312180291 Moscow TASS in English
1643 GMT 23 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Lyudmila Yermakova]

[Text] Moscow December 23 TASS—The Soviet Constitutional Compliance Committee decided on Monday [23 December] to disband itself, as the Soviet Union ceased to exist.

But the committee's chairman Sergey Alekseyev believes the new Commonwealth will come to realise the need to have an interstate legal body. "It is necessary to protect human rights, promote democracy and stop the arbitrariness of any authorities, as well as to solve interstate conflicts," Alekseyev told TASS.

Shevardnadze Returns to Foreign Policy Group

LD2312190591 Moscow All-Union Radio Mayak
Network in Russian 1730 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Text] Eduard Shevardnadze, USSR minister of external relations, has returned to his work as director of the Foreign Policy Association.

Joint RSFSR Foreign Ministry Meeting Held

LD2412032891 Moscow TASS International Service
in Russian 1917 GMT 23 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Andrey Pershin and Georgiy Shmelev]

[Text] Moscow, 23 Dec (TASS)—At the joint sitting of the USSR External Relations Ministry and Russian Foreign Ministry collegiums, the future of the former USSR departments for external policy and external trade, transferred to the Russian Foreign Ministry's jurisdiction by RSFSR President Boris Yeltsin's decree, were discussed.

RSFSR Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev addressed the sitting, mentioning that among the number of the department's foremost tasks is ensuring Russia's succession in the international sphere, as well as giving appropriate assistance to other independent states of the Commonwealth. The minister feels that the new ministry's staff should not exceed 2,700 people.

Kozyrev said Deputy Ministers Fedor Shelov-Kovedyayev, Boris Kolokolov, Georgiy Kunadze, and Georgiy Mamedov will be engaged in the RSFSR Foreign Ministry's operational management under the new conditions. Kozyrev noted that the USSR Foreign Ministry was "lagging behind considerably in its work" over the past few years, being part of the union structures slowing the processes of "sovereignization of the republics, democratic restructuring, and progress in a true spirit of time." In this context, the minister mentioned "the Union Foreign Ministry's indistinct position" during the attempted coup in August this year.

Former USSR External Relations Minister Eduard Shevardnadze was not present at the sitting; however, Kozyrev said that he counts on his "help and cooperation not just during the initial stage of the ministry's work."

Spokesman Notes New Role of Intelligence

LD2112085291 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1540 GMT 15 Dec 91

[Interview with Yuriy Kobaladze, chief of the Central Intelligence Service press service, by correspondent Aleksandr Drozdov; place and date not given; on the "International Panorama" program—live or recorded]

[Text] [Drozdov] Yuriy, how do you evaluate the role of the Central Intelligence Agency of the United States in the policy of that country with regard to the USSR today?

[Kobaladze] American intelligence is interested in the processes which are taking place in our country. They really should know, in order to predict correctly, in order to give a correct evaluation and forecast to its leadership, so that the leadership makes less mistakes. There is a kind of stabilizing factor in this. We also should follow these processes. We should know what is happening there. There are some areas in which we are finding common fields of interests, for example, international terrorism. We may even cooperate here on in the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

[Drozdov] Incidentally, what is the new philosophy of intelligence? Is it an unwritten code of rules, or perhaps official instructions?

[Kobaladze] There is no such written law or philosophy, but we are adapting to the new conditions, to the new world. If national interests demand work on those countries where we did not work before or where we had begun to work before, we will work there in another way

or organize our work as the present situation demands. That is probably what the philosophy of intelligence is.

[Drozdov] The country is going through a very difficult time now. How do you evaluate the state of external intelligence? After all, it is part of what is called a single national economic mechanism. In principle, it is production.

[Kobaladze] We are not indifferent to what is happening in our country. We feel all these problems acutely. But, I should say that, on the whole, intelligence is very fragile. It is a fragile, delicate mechanism. We very much hope that this mechanism will be preserved.

Merger of Security Service Assessed

PM2312150191 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian
21 Dec 91 Union Edition p 1

[Report by V. Rudnev and S. Mostovshchikov: "The 'K' has Gone, the 'G' Has Disappeared; Who Is Left at the KGB?"]

[Text] On 19 December Boris Yeltsin introduced the latest modernization into our life. By his decree he has abolished two KGB's at the same time—the Russian and the Union—which have recently been converted correspondingly into the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic [RSFSR] Federal Security Agency [FSA] and the Interrepublic Security Service [ISS]. In addition, two Interior Ministries—the USSR and the RSFSR—have been deprived of the right to life. It is planned to turn all this into something new—the RSFSR MSIA—the Ministry of Security and Internal Affairs.

Judging from the text of the decree, this is what will happen: All the buildings and premises, the material and technical facilities, the computer data banks, official documentation, and other property of the four abolished departments will be taken over by Russia. All the personnel of the abolished institutions may remain in their posts until 1 July 1992. But those destined for separation or retirement obviously have to consider their future. Accordingly the RSFSR MSIA is instructed as of 1 July 1992 to leave in place only highly skilled leaders, operations personnel, investigators, and so forth. According to IZVESTIYA's information, the minister is to be Viktor Barannikov, former leader of the Union Interior Ministry.

Observers are expressing diametrically opposed views on the occurrence. The whole range of assessments have been expressed—from complete rejoicing at the strengthening of Russia's legal protection system to horror because Yeltsin is creating rigid dictatorial structures and the merger of the militia and the KGB means a return to that unforgettable monster, the NKVD.

We were unable to obtain a comment at the office of Sergey Shakhrai, RSFSR State Counselor and deputy chairman of the Russian Government. Shakhrai himself was on vacation and his staffers "do not know what is going on."

RSFSR Interior Minister Andrey Dunayev is optimistic, despite the fact that he is already a former minister.

Dunayev believes that the mobilization as a single force of the operational units working to combat crime meets the interests and tasks of the moment. At the same time, assessing the expediency of the proposed MSIA structure, he said that there are nuances here which make it impossible to say now that the ideal solution has been found. The former minister did not specify what kind of nuances these are but said merely: "Time will tell."

In the former USSR Interior Ministry press service time has apparently already told us something, namely told that Yeltsin's decree is undoubtedly positive in one respect: It marks the end of the existence on the territory of a single state—Russia—and a single city—Moscow—of four monsters which largely duplicate one another, generating paperwork and having no significance in the campaign against crime.

Viktor Barannikov, former USSR interior minister and now Russian minister of security and internal affairs, has made no statements for the press. However, after familiarizing the leadership of the former ministry with Yeltsin's decree he noted unambiguously: The professionals have nothing to fear; they will go on doing what they did before.

There is no observable panic at the ISS.

ISS staffers cite point 2 of the Yeltsin decree in which the new MSIA is given the task of studying proposals to highlight an individual area of the service safeguarding the state security of the RSFSR. The view at the Lubyanka is that the professionals here will remain in their offices and go on doing what they have been doing. It is simply that their new boss is now Barannikov's deputy.

At the ISS they are sure of one more thing: There will be no more feuding with their colleagues from the RSFSR FSA, who have recently forgotten their Lubyanka home and really put on airs.

Nothing is known about the nomination of the new chief of the Russian security service in the RSFSR MSIA system. At 1100 hours 20 December Vadim Bakatin held a conference and simply briefed those present on the Yeltsin decree.

He did not say a word about the possibility of his retirement, although it is believed that he will retire: It will be difficult and illogical for Bakatin to be "under Barannikov," his former subordinate.

Two likely candidates are being named for the post of Lubyanka commander—either Oleynikov, Bakatin's present deputy, or Ivanenko, chief of the FSA. In addition, the arrival of an outsider is not being ruled out.

Autonomous Policy Interests Internal Ministry

92P50063A Moscow ARGUMENTY I FAKTY
in Russian No 49, Dec 91

[Unattributed report]

[Text] In No. 39 we reported that quite possibly a new analytical center is ripening in the bowels of the reformed KGB and conducting its policy autonomously in the best Krychkov traditions.

We have learned from confidential sources that both the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of Internal Affairs are interested in such a type of "autonomouslyness." In the dining rooms of generals there are evening "gatherings" at which a number of higher and middle ranks discuss the present situation. Even Militia General F. allegedly has gone about his usual business of collecting party membership dues. It is impossible, of course, to contend that these meetings are completely useless. Perhaps the time will come when these talking points come in handy for someone.

Former KGB Officers Favor 'Strong Hand'

LD2412121891 Moscow MOSCOW NEWS
in English No. 50, 15-22 Dec 91 p 4

[Text] Many officers of the former KGB (which has been transformed into the Interrepublican Security Service, ISS, Central Intelligence Service, CIS, and Federal Security Agency of Russia) believe that resignation of the incumbent USSR President would be a logical step, in view of his moral responsibility for the disintegration of the country and setting in of anarchy and uncertainty in society.

In their opinion, presence of the half-paralyzed and doomed "Union" central powers has a negative effect on the work of the national and Russian security agencies, particularly the CIS, designed to promote the interests of the nation rather than abstract human values in the disintegrating USSR and aborted Union of Sovereign States.

It is widely believed, in the Russian security agency, that the huge CIS machinery catering to the largely decorative functions of the USSR President and his protege, Primakov, is at odds with the needs of political reality and cannot last for very long. In their opinion, procrastinating the solution of this problem would lead to complete dislocation of the operational and analytical potential of the intelligence serve which Russia needs so much.

At the same time, it would be a gross mistake to overestimate the former KGB officers' "love" for Yeltsin or their unconditional loyalty to him. The ISS cannot exclude a possibility that—in case Yeltsin follows in Gorbachev's steps—the officers would support a "strong hand" capable of putting an end to Russia's disintegration and averting the complete disintegration of the security agencies.

Such attitudes are to a certain degree shared by the military who fear that the USSR's possible disintegration would make the situation in the armed forces uncontrollable. Recent surprise replacement of Army General Lobov by Col.-General Samsonov (who displayed complete loyalty towards Russia's government during the putsch attempt) in the capacity of Chief of General Staff, is interpreted as a sign of the generals' preparedness to come out in protection of the integrity of the military potential of the armed forces.

Purges and replacements are expected in the Defence Ministry and the general staff soon. But, according to the ISS assessment, it is not going to be a sweeping campaign which might further deteriorate the situation in the army whose support Yeltsin needs now, at the start of the "shock-treatment" economic reform.

Commonwealth Affairs

Agreements on Gorbachev, Shaposhnikov Noted

PM2412103591 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA
PRAVDA in Russian 24 Dec 91 p 1

[S. Drozdov report: "First Secrets of Commonwealth of Independent States"]

[Text] We have learned from reliable sources that in addition to the six agreements signed in Alma-Ata which have been made public there are another two about which we will be briefed somewhat later.

The first concerns the appointment of Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov as commander in chief of the Joint Armed Forces. A difficulty that has to be overcome is the fact that Ukraine and Azerbaijan already have their own commanders in chief—their own presidents.

The second agreement that has not as yet been made public concerns M.S. Gorbachev's future position. To a greater degree—his material position.

It has been decided that he will receive index-linked wages (amounting to the remuneration received in his last job). The government "Zil" and "GAZ-34" vehicles are being left at his disposal. He has been allocated a state dacha and a 20-man guard...

According to some information, M. Gorbachev has already virtually found himself a new job—most likely he will head an organization known as the Gorbachev Foundation.

Uzbek President Comments on Implications

PM2312115091 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian
23 Dec 91 p 2

[Adilbek Kaipbergenov report on news conference by Uzbek President I. Karimov following Alma-Ata meeting: "I. Karimov: With Goodwill, Without a 'Center' System"]

[Text] Tashkent—The brief news conference held immediately after the meeting of the 11 leaders in Alma-Ata probably prompted more questions than it provided answers to the questions that are worrying people.

Answering numerous questions, the head of the republic stressed that all the parts of the former Union are strongly interconnected. And it would be a very big mistake to break the bonds today.

[Unidentified questioner] "Do the documents that were signed restrict the republic's independence?"

[Karimov] "On the contrary. The old Union is no more. There is a Commonwealth of the free. Each republic, taking its own interests into account, voluntarily forms a Commonwealth without the system of the 'center,' which used to fight for self-preservation on any pretext."

Touching on the future of the Armed Forces and servicemen, I. Karimov said that the question has been deferred until 30 December. Two opinions emerged during the discussion. One is in favor of preserving the Army and its control structures in their previous form. The other is that the republic should have its own structures. It is my opinion that each military district should be under the jurisdiction of a republic, but at the same time it is necessary to organize joint command of the armed forces of all states belonging to the Commonwealth on the NATO model.

Answering this question from PRAVDA's correspondent: Can people, after a prolonged period of uncertainty and anxiety, now look to the future with optimism? I. Karimov said:

"Uzbekistan has the opportunity to stop being a semi-colony and become a developed autonomous state, ensuring all its citizens a worthy life."

Leaders Assemble for First Working Meeting

LD2412112391 Moscow TASS International Service
in Russian 1058 GMT 24 Dec 91

[Text] Moscow, 24 Dec (TASS)—The heads of the governments of the states which signed the declaration on the Commonwealth of Independent States have assembled today for their first working meeting. Several documents for the meeting in Minsk are expected to be prepared at this meeting.

The working meeting was opened by Gennadiy Burbulis, RSFSR state secretary and first deputy chairman of the Russian government. Yegor Gaydar, the first vice-premier of the government, gave a report.

The meeting is taking place behind doors closed to journalists. Observers single out as possible problems under discussion here such acute issues for all of Commonwealth states as the restoration of economic links and the forthcoming prices liberalization in Russia.

Burbulis Reports Agenda for 30 Dec Meeting*LD2312195991 Moscow Radio Rossii Network
in Russian 1800 GMT 23 Dec 91*

[Text] Commonwealth rules will be adopted in the course of a meeting in Minsk of councils of heads of state and government of the Commonwealth of Independent States scheduled for 30 December. Gennadiy Burbulis, first deputy prime minister of the Russian Federation, announced this at a news conference in Moscow today. According to him, this document will define, among other things, the procedure for joining, leaving, and expelling from the Commonwealth. The Minsk conference is also expected to arrive at a definitive solution for all the issues related to a defense alliance.

Returning to the position of states regarding nuclear weapons, Gennadiy Burbulis noted that, whereas the Ukraine and Belarus intend to become nuclear-free zones, Kazakhstan will keep strategic nuclear arms on its territory for some time. Control over them will be handed to Russia.

Media**Newspapers, Journals on 'Brink of Bankruptcy'***LD2112041191 Moscow Russian Television Network
in Russian 2100 GMT 20 Dec 91*

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] The Communications Ministry is preparing to inflict a fatal blow on the press. Many newspapers and journals are on the brink of bankruptcy: KOMSOMOLKA and TRUD are bracing themselves for losses of 800 million, while IZVESTIYA will lose 110 million next year. Andrey Pishchayev explains why:

[Pishchayev] The Communications Ministry has startled journalists yet again. The Ministry is raising the charges for its services. This means that publishing houses will go out of business; newspapers will not be published. Of the 15,000 journalists in Moscow, 7,000 will find themselves on the streets.

The plight of the mass media is critical. We are being manifestly plundered, leaders of the Confederation of Unions of Journalists resignedly declared today. The Ministry issued an ultimatum: either publications close and money is returned to subscribers or the press raises its prices. In other words, newspapers will now cost 7-8 rubles.

By agreeing to the increased charges for the Ministry's services, publishing houses find themselves on the verge of bankruptcy. In retaliation, publishers are prepared to call a mass strike of press workers and hold a meeting in defense of the press. The journalists hope to stick up for themselves and for us, the subscribers.

Army Daily Cites Financial Strains on Press*PM2312103391 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA
in Russian 21 Dec 91 First Edition p 1*

[Unattributed report: "Robbery! And The Press Is a Victim, Too..."]

[Text] It is the idea of robbery which surely expresses most accurately the content and tone of the articles in the most varied newspapers and magazines on the situation in which the press now finds itself. Prices for paper are rising all the time. Soyuzpechat is imposing the most difficult conditions on editorial offices and publishing houses, demanding 55 percent of the sale price of each newspaper for their services. But the other day the RSFSR Communications Ministry let off a real "bombshell" when it announced a sharp rise in the charge for the delivery and distribution of subscription publications. Of course, these demands are due primarily to the demands of other monopolists, in particularly transport providers. But unfortunately, that does not make it any easier for either journalists or readers.

The following figures are being cited in the press today: In 1992 the publication of IZVESTIYA will incur a loss of 110 million rubles, that of TRUD and KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA—800 million!

Preliminary figures show that in present conditions, KRASNAYA ZVEZDA will also be tens of millions in the red. And this is for a newspaper which for many years brought the state and the USSR Defense Ministry substantial profits.

We are hoping for help from our founder. Without it the newspaper will not survive. The army and the many thousands of people connected with it need KRASNAYA ZVEZDA. But if the price-cranking policy continues in the future, eventually even the whole military budget will not be sufficient subsidy.

People say to us: Increase your prices. But to achieve a profitable operation, the price of annual subscription to KRASNAYA ZVEZDA will have to rise to 160 rubles. In that case, however, what will happen to the group of readers with the least social protection—invalids and war veterans and soldiers' mothers?

Journalists from the most varied publications are joining forces in the struggle against high-handedness. For example, on 20 December there was a press conference of representatives of a number of newspapers and magazines at the Central House of Journalists. The determination to take the most serious steps was declared.

KRASNAYA ZVEZDA workers express solidarity with their colleagues. What kind of market is this if the bigger a newspaper's print run and the more popular it is, the greater the editorial office's losses are? This is not democracy. This is the economic suffocation of glasnost.

Paper Tops Publishing Limit, Drops 2 Issues

PM2212165191 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian
21 Dec 91 Union Edition p 12

[Unattributed announcement: "For the Information of Readers"]

[Text] We have to announce that this Saturday, 21 December, Muscovites and on Monday, 23 December, people living in other cities and rural areas in the country and abroad will not be finding the latest issue of our paper in their mailboxes or at Soyuzpechat kiosks. And the same thing will happen again in a week's time.

This has nothing to do with the Communications Ministry. The point is that we can publish only 308 issues annually for sale to subscribers and we are already two papers ahead of that schedule. In order to get back to the norm we have to "drop" two issues.

More Details on PRAVDA Dispute Background

PM2412094191 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA
in Russian 19 Dec 91 First Edition p 2

[Inna Muravyeva report under the "We Report Details" rubric: "On PRAVDA Street—Only 'Pravda', the Whole 'Pravda,' and Nothing But the 'Pravda'?"...]

[Text] The latest conflict on PRAVDA Street, in the house of the once all-powerful eponymous newspaper, has attracted the attention of many of the mass media. Some wrote: "PRAVDA is being evicted from its premises and deprived of the former PRAVDA publishing house (now the PRESSA publishing house)." And immediately there were people prepared to shed tears for the "unjustly ill-treated." If we are good at something, it is feeling sorry for those who are shedding tears. And also shedding tears ourselves. Although PRAVDA's tears, I swear, are not genuine. And both the "daily battle reports" published by that newspaper over the last few days, and the appeals to gullible subscribers—"PRAVDA is being stifled!"—evoke puzzlement.

...The hearings which took place 17 December at the RSFSR Supreme Soviet Mass Media Committee were attended by "all the parties involved in the conflict"—Gennadiy Seleznev, chief editor of PRAVDA, his deputy Aleksandr Ilin, and also Viktor Ilyukhin, head of the newspaper's legal department, Vyacheslav Leontyev, director of the PRESSA publishing house, Mikhail Fedotov, RSFSR deputy minister of press and information, and members of the committee.

Vyacheslav Leontyev said: "The PRAVDA newspaper occupies premises which from the outset could have housed three more newspapers and nine journals. There were moves in this direction back in the times of the all-powerful Politburo. But Zimyanin himself prohibited 'crowding' the country's chief newspaper."

Yes, the once powerful and rich editorial staff which had at its disposal 3,730 square meters of office space—and

on the admission of the chief editor "there are two types of offices—25-meter offices and 14-meter offices, a movie hall, a library, computers, and the latest equipment," and all sorts of other trifles which made the work and life of the country's "chief" journalists so attractive—this editorial staff must now make room. And why not? After all, having cast off the yoke of obligatory subscription to PRAVDA, readers have had their say, which led to the substantial reduction of the newspaper's circulation, and consequently also its numerous staff.

Immediately after the suppression of the August putsch, the collective dissociated itself from its predecessor—the former powerful PRAVDA—declaring that it was setting up an independent newspaper with the same name. At that time the question of moving new publications into the vast building at No. 24, PRAVDA Street evoked no objections from either the newspaper's leadership or the editorial collective. And the discussion to this effect was conducted calmly, without emotional outbursts. But that was then, 2 to 3 months ago, when the "August revolution" had triumphed. This was probably precisely the reason why the country's chief newspaper "graciously permitted" the weekly ROSSIYA to move into its premises and agreed to share its printing premises with ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA.

Now when the political winds have become highly erratic, when some people are already loudly prophesying that "people's patience is at an end, that what is needed is strong power!"—the new "independent PRAVDA" which, let me remind you, had dissociated itself from its predecessor during registration, is prepared to return everything to "square one." Gennadiy Seleznev declared during the hearings at the RSFSR Supreme Soviet that a meeting of the labor collective had been held at PRAVDA recently, and that the protocol of that meeting states "black on white" that the PRAVDA newspaper is the legal successor of the other PRAVDA, and that it has the right to use the property which it actually owned. But if this is the case, why did the collective did not say so in the documents submitted when applying for registration? It was because under Russian laws that newspaper would not have been registered. Proclaiming yourself the legal successor of the main organ of the CPSU Central Committee would have meant ceasing to exist there and then. Now, when those who suffered defeat in August are rearing their heads, it is possible and even advantageous to do this: "Compassionate readers will not leave us in the lurch"...

And so, if you are PRAVDA's legal successor, it means that all its premises are yours and that you can dispose of them as you see fit. And so the newspaper has installed a rich commercial organization in these premises. And it is the latter's interests which are being defended so passionately. Gennadiy Seleznev admitted honestly: "Leaving PRAVDA high and dry would be tantamount to burying it. In the longer term, we see ourselves as a joint-stock company."

Well, this is an excellent and healthy desire, entirely in the spirit of the market. The only question is why should some be able to enter this market with bulging pockets, while others have to start with their pockets half empty? Why PRAVDA's starting positions on entering the market should be vast premises, the latest equipment, luxurious offices and post-modern furniture, while other publications enter the market with nothing but a pen and a scratched desk. Incidentally, as members of the committee learned, these types of conflicts are arising not only in Moscow, and not only at PRAVDA.

I believe that Deputy Minister Mikhail Fedotov was absolutely right emphasizing several times during the session: "This is not a political issue, it is an issue pertaining to economic law." There is no need for colleagues from PRAVDA to shed tears, there is no need to shift everything into the political sphere, to proclaim one thing from their pages, while having something quite different in mind: "On PRAVDA Street there should be only 'pravda,' the whole 'ravda', and nothing but the 'pravda.'"

And although Viktor Ilyukhin (head of PRAVDA's legal department) accused the Russian Ministry of Press and Information of having initiated the legal absurdities and casuistry, and although after Ilyukhin's statement, committee member Sergey Sheboldayev expressed his negative attitude to what is happening, I believe that the committee acted wisely: This is a matter pertaining to economic law and it should be examined in a court of arbitration.

Article on Conflict

PM2412094991 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian
20 Dec 91 pp 1-2

[Aleksandr Ilin article: "What Lies Behind the Conflict Over PRAVDA: Let's Get Things Clear, Colleagues!"]

[Text] It is tough for everyone today—workers, who are very frightened by the coming privatization; peasants, whose labor is devalued by the discrepancies between prices for industrial and agricultural output; scientific and technical workers, because many institutes of Union jurisdiction have found themselves without resources, and their future is uncertain and worrying; students, payment of whose meager grant is being held up... And all of us who are victims of "perestroika," which has now disappeared, leaving us with the freedom to go hungry, when there is not even anything to redeem against the ration coupons.

Seen against such an ominous background of "our winter of anxiety," the conflict surrounding PRAVDA—and here I almost agree with my colleagues from a number of, to put it mildly, not very friendly publications—might actually seem just an irksome misunderstanding. A previously omnipotent newspaper which had no worries has a bit of pressure applied to it and is forced to contract somewhat, and immediately PRAVDA staff turn on the tears and demand understanding and sympathy. And,

what is more, try to give a political hue to a commonplace dispute over property, alleging that the new authorities are seeking via the management of the "Pressa" Publishing House to stifle an undesirable newspaper whose independent stance does not suit some people...

Journalists of IZVESTIYA, ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA, and a number of other publications have written about this in their comments filed from the recent session of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet Committee on the Mass Media. A correspondent of Russian television's "Vesti" program also commented on the event with a good measure of gloating. The position adopted by M.A. Fedotov, deputy minister of the RSFSR Ministry of Information and the Press, who maintained at the session that PRAVDA has no right to claim anything today, particularly attracted "Vesti." Other colleagues have had no qualms about distorting certain facts in order to point up the PRAVDA staff's intractability: They will not even share offices with the newspaper ROSSIYA. However, the journalists of that weekly have been based in the PRAVDA building for a month now. Various conjecture is also being written about our editorial office's commercial service, although explanations on that score have already been repeatedly carried in the newspaper.

All right, there is a need to explain yet again. What is involved, esteemed colleagues, are matters which are far more serious than might appear to you and your readers. I am not inclined to exaggerate the political hue of the events surrounding our newspaper, and in this regard I concur with the opinion of the majority of the members of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet committee that the contentious issues surrounding PRAVDA can and must be solved by arbitration, which, incidentally, our editorial office has sought. But something else cannot be overlooked either, and this was also discussed at the committee session—the situation in which the journalists of former party newspapers find themselves. They, PRAVDA included, were far from "omnipotent," but suffered maybe more than others from certain obtuse party apparatchiks at all levels—from raykom [rayon party committee] level to the CPSU Central Committee.

I started working on our newspaper in the press department and I can confirm through many articles from those years that we saw our journalistic task as helping colleagues, chiefly from the local press, to defend themselves against persecution for criticism. I will cite just one article prepared by me and the late PRAVDA correspondent for Azerbaijan, Leonid Tairov, about the burning of an edition of the rayon newspaper in Geokchay which had dared to mortally offend a member of the raykom bureau. And I am glad that it was possible to defend the editor of the rayon newspaper and that after PRAVDA's article members of the raykom and workers in the republic's central committee guilty of high-handedness were punished for their wrongful action.

It is with a sense of bitterness that I regard the fact that many traditions of journalistic solidarity have somehow

been forgotten today and been replaced by a desire to put the knife into one's colleagues. And additionally drag petty political motive into the wrangling. Inna Muravyeva from ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA, for example, after making sarcastic comments about "apartments" and PRAVDA's loss of previously "compulsory" subscribers, goes straight on to link the PRAVDA workers' desire to defend their rights to the instability of the political winds and predictions of a possible social explosion. "Those defeated in August are rearing their heads" now, it is alleged, and PRAVDA would like to put everything back the way it was... I must clear things up here, esteemed colleague, it was not the other day, as you write, but actually in August, when our newspaper was closed, that the assembly of the labor collective took place and legal succession was stated. And it is written in the newspaper's statutes that PRAVDA's existence dates from the daily workers newspaper founded in 1912, which, incidentally, was financed by Russia's workers themselves. So there are no grounds for accusing us of political opportunism.

Today's PRAVDA is an independent newspaper in deed, not just in words—it is opposed to lawlessness and high-handedness wherever they originate. And this is noticed by its readers who supported it both at the birth of the workers newspaper and by their hard-earned rubles. We will continue to count upon the support of our readers, supporters, and friends.

No, PRAVDA workers are not fighting for unnecessary floorspace. They are fighting for their rights, rights which they have been stripped of as a result of the "transformations" of the former PRAVDA Publishing House. We could at any moment (let us remember M.A. Fedotov's statements) not only be "squeezed," but unceremoniously chucked out onto the street. But we are not defending only our rights; many other newspapers, after all, are in essentially the same position. Nor can it be ruled out that the rest of the publishing houses could end up in a similar situation if questions of "change of jurisdiction and transformation" are resolved on someone's whim or on political grounds rather than on the basis of the law. At that same session, incidentally, L.M. Mishustina, S.B. Sheboldayev, A.V. Brechalov, and other members of the Committee on the Mass Media spoke about this in a well-argued way.

And, of course, the strong-arm pressure being applied to PRAVDA by the leaders of the "Pressa" Publishing House is bound to cause indignation. And likewise the methods employed to "elbow out" our colleagues from the "Panorama" and "Planeta" Publishing Houses. And the exorbitant rates imposed by the communications workers, transport workers, and so forth could stifle any publication, irrespective of its political leanings. I think that journalistic solidarity to preserve genuine freedom of speech, glasnost, and democracy is far more fruitful in this situation than the settling of scores.

And let economic and legal disputes be resolved by the courts, as laid down. On the basis of the law and the law alone.

TASS Carries Press Review for 21 Dec

LD2112100291 Moscow TASS in English 0719 GMT
21 Dec 91

["Soviet Press Review"—TASS headline]

[Text] Moscow December 21 TASS—Today's newspapers continue commenting on the meeting of the presidents of former Soviet republics in Kazakhstan capital Alma-Ata on Saturday.

The newspapers PRAVDA and KRASNAYA ZVEZDA said that the most heated discussions may arise over the first bodies of power in the Commonwealth of Independent States, primarily military structures, and strategic forces, which will be under unified command, according to agreements reached in Brest and Ashkhabad.

The newspaper RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA publishes Gorbachev's message to the participants in the meeting.

Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev has not been invited to take part in the meeting in Alma-Ata, Kazakhstan president's spokesman told journalists on Friday.

The Soviet youth daily KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA carries reports by its correspondents from Minsk, Alma-Ata, Kiev and other cities.

"I hope we will create a Commonwealth of Independent States on a normal human basis, in accordance with the principle of equality," Turkmenistan President Saparmurad Niyazov told PRAVDA.

Newspapers comment on the results of Russian Republic President Boris Yeltsin's visit to Italy.

The Soviet trade union daily TRUD said "the Russian president has received a substantial credit of trust," adding the visit helped "lay a firm foundation of Russian-Italian relations".

PRAVDA criticises the decision of the Russian Ministry of Communications to raise delivery rates for periodicals. The move will put many newspapers and magazines on a "starvation ration" and leave about 7,000 journalists jobless, the newspaper said.

Newspapers publish the Russian president's decree appointing Ivan Silayev, who has been in effect the Soviet prime minister since August, as Russia's permanent representative to the European Community.

Yeltsin also appointed Viktor Barannikov Russian security and interior minister.

In an interview with the Soviet military daily KRASNAYA ZVEZDA, Yuriy Bulygin, military counter-intelligence chief, warned the Soviet Armed Forces are

being used by various contending forces to instigate inter-ethnic hatred and religious conflicts.

He said the situation is being compounded by the deep social and economic crisis in the country and the disintegration of the state.

PRAVDA carries an interview with Mohammad Bakir Farin, deputy Afghan security minister, in which he tells about his Ministry's efforts to fight drug business in Afghanistan.

He said the majority of such businesses on the Afghan-Pakistani border are controlled by Afghan opposition leader Gulbuddin Hikmatyar.

Deputy Soviet Defence Minister Boris Pyankov denied in KRASNAYA ZVEZDA rumours that about 1.5 million troops are massing along the Dnieper river in Ukraine.

Pyankov heads a group of officers helping Ukraine create its own armed forces.

KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA said the August putsch had been first planned in December 1990. It said that according to secret documents, former KGB chief Vladimir Kryuchkov and his aides did not go ahead with the conspiracy because of fierce resistance at that time.

Newspapers also carry reports about the situation in the north Caucasus, South Ossetia, Nagorno-Karabakh, Yugoslavia, the Middle East and Latin America.

Military

Problems of Sovereign States' Defense Viewed

PM2312150291 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA
in Russian 20 Dec 91 First Edition p 2

[Article by Doctor of Military Sciences Professor Major General V. Slipchenko: "The Defense of Sovereign States. Military Reform: A View of the Problem"]

[Text] Changes in our national-state structure are leading to an increasingly urgent need for new approaches to defense questions. In particular, if, in the process of formation of the Commonwealth of Independent States, all the members of the former Union do not reach a mutual understanding, and various forms of state ties are established among them, then obviously their military cooperation will not be based on a single system of collective defense. Various versions could arise here too.

Of course, the collective defense of the states would be more effective. History knows many examples of small sovereign states achieving reliable defense in the collective resolution of security problems. But in our case the division of the unified Armed Forces has already begun. Unless this process is halted in good time by appropriate agreements, the present Armed Forces will simply cease to exist as a unified military organism. And what will this lead to? Sovereign states such as the RSFSR, Ukraine,

Kazakhstan, and Belarus will be the possessors of strategic nuclear arms. The others will "inherit" only groupings of conventional armed forces and armaments...

True, every sovereign state is perfectly entitled to create its own armed forces. But here it should be taken into account that the civilized community has by now formulated and adopted, by way of appropriate treaty terms, a series of major international agreements which should be strictly observed by all states. So the states now acquiring sovereignty will have to resolve not only the problem of defense, but also the problem of strict compliance with the provisions of those international agreements that were signed by the former USSR. They will have to formulate their own military doctrine and define the objectives and tasks of the armed forces and their structure on the basis of strict compliance with international treaties, agreements, and declarations. If the control of strategic nuclear weapons becomes decentralized, not only will new nuclear states spring up, but the mechanism of military-strategic equilibrium will be disrupted, which could lead to unpredictable consequences.

A complex problem is also developing over the functioning of the strategic defensive forces of the present USSR Armed Forces, and in particular the statewide missile attack warning system. Its over-the-horizon systems [uzly] for the detection of ballistic missiles in flight, in accordance with the ABM Treaty (1982), were set up strictly on the perimeter of the former Union, but have now ended up on the territory of different sovereign states: the RSFSR, Ukraine, Latvia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan. And there is no possibility of even temporarily suspending the operation of even one of these systems, since only their joint and continuous operation can tell us reliably that there is no missile attack or give timely warning of the start of such an attack. Evidently, whatever the state system, it will still be necessary to seek compromises on these serious and complex problems, to which there simply are no other solutions.

An even more dangerous feature of the option whereby the sovereign states create their own armed forces is the possibility of their being used to pose a real or hypothetical threat to one another. This is fraught with the risk of not merely conflicts, but a real war like that in Yugoslavia.

And so the option to be preferred is that in which a sovereign state, having set up its own national armed forces, assigns part of them to the joint [obyedinennyye] or common [obshchiye] armed forces of the Commonwealth. The transition to this form of military cooperation will rule out the unpredictability of the use of the sovereign armed forces.

The defense of the Commonwealth of States would in this case constitute an integral system with a joint nuclear potential, air defense, control, and supply, and a unified military-industrial complex.

This option is reminiscent of the existing Armed Forces. But in the context of its implementation in practice,

substantial changes could be made to the composition, groupings, and functions of the unified armed forces. Here new approaches could be used, taking account of the sovereign states' interests.

Joint armed forces and unified defense of the operational-strategic area are possible given the following elements: a single military doctrine incorporating the military doctrines of the sovereign states; unified defense leadership, controlling financial, personnel, military-technical, and other questions on the scale of the entire operational-strategic area; a single staff, formulating the strategic defense plan, plans for specific autonomous and joint defensive operations by the armed forces, and strategic and operational deployment plans; a common system of material provision for the armed forces in peacetime and wartime; a common system of military infrastructure; a common system of orders for armaments and military hardware and for scientific work; a unified system of command and control of all the armed forces, including strategic nuclear forces.

Only armed forces of this kind make it possible to protect a single industrial and space-related [kosmicheskoye] area. And that means that the functioning of the systems of television, communications, meteorology, navigation, intelligence, monitoring of the ecological situation, and so forth will be ensured.

If the above elements are not realized, there is clearly no point in setting about building the Commonwealth's joint armed forces; it is better to let each sovereign state tackle its own problems in isolation. But in that case they can expect painful progress along an autonomous and very costly road, which in present-day conditions will be a heavy burden on the state. And every individual and the whole of society in each sovereign state should know that. No one should have any illusion that sovereignty can be safeguarded more cheaply in isolation.

Joint armed forces also have a number of other advantages over sovereign armed forces. Here the problems of military building, manning, and standardization of arms and military hardware could be resolved more simply and more effectively within the borders of a single operational-strategic area. It is easier to coordinate measures to build confidence in the military activity of each sovereign states if the possibility of the development of internal political processes in the direction of heightened aggression can be ruled out.

Nor can the combined option of collective defense be ruled out, whereby a number of sovereign states would agree to have only, say, unified strategic nuclear forces, while the other forces would be involved only in a military-political alliance. Since nuclear weapons require not only professional handling, but also periodical replacement, modernization, and tests, this could be beyond the powers of those states that have inherited them through force of circumstances. Furthermore, nuclear weapons are more in the nature of a political means, and in the conditions of the complex resolution

of national problems and border questions the very idea that they could be used for the purposes of threats or blackmail cannot be tolerated.

It is very important that, in the context of the creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States joint armed forces, no one should be able to accuse us of reviving the bloc system. Nor should parity with NATO be sought, since that will lead ultimately to confrontation. A defensive alliance should not be linked to economic or political treaties. It should be formulated with the participation of all interested parties.

Background of Army General Lobov's Dismissal

PM2312101591 Moscow MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI in Russian No. 50, 15 Dec 91 (signed to press 10 Dec 91) p 2

[Yuriy Teplyakov article: "Generals Are Leaving. Why? On Cadre Changes in the General Staff"]

[Text] Information, like water, has to leak out somewhere sometime, even if the events are taking place in the Soviet Armed Forces General Staff, and especially as the event was expected. Right up to the very last moment it was not known who would appear in the role of retiree—Shaposhnikov or Lobov. But everything had been decided by the evening of 6 December. The car had just left to get Army General Vladimir Lobov from the airfield (the chief of the General Staff was returning from an official trip to Britain), but the news was already being surreptitiously discussed in the corridors of military power. Gorbachev is summoning Lobov—that means?... Correct. The next day the secret ceased to be a secret. Lobov left his post, which he had occupied for three months and a few days.

The idea was that Lobov would occupy the chief of General Staff's office immediately after Marshal Sergey Akhromeyev had vacated it. That was in 1988. It was snatched from under his nose by the virtually unheard-of General Mikhail Moiseyev, who came to Moscow via the Far East. In a conversation with me at the time Lobov did not hide his irritation over this. The appointment was unexpected and strange from the military career viewpoint. Everyone expected Lobov to replace Akhromeyev—both by virtue of his being his first deputy and by virtue of his standing in the Army: He is a doctor of military sciences and a man who has climbed practically all the rungs of the career ladder. This is valued in the Army, where upstarts who get to the top as a result of some sort of political games are resented. But Lobov's time had still not yet come—he was assigned to the practically meaningless post of chief of staff of the Warsaw military pact. After the August putsch they remembered Lobov, who to all intents and purposes assumed responsibility for all Army affairs, whereas the new minister, Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov, assumed more of a politician's role. Probably, when appointing them both, it just did not occur to the USSR president that such different figures as Shaposhnikov and Lobov would

come into conflict. The point is that both the minister and the chief of the General Staff have their own concepts of the reform of the Army. It is known that Lobov is the author of a draft whereby a civil servant would head the Ministry of Defense. The General Staff will be the only purely military structure in this department. Marshal of Aviation Shaposhnikov has his own views on this point.

Both generals did not enter into open conflicts, but every colonel in the white marble building in the Arbat is now firmly convinced: Evidently Shaposhnikov presented Gorbachev with the condition for his continued work. The president had to make a choice, and he did so. It is a curious fact that several more major figures in the Army leadership were sent into retirement along with Lobov: Chief of Rear Services Arkhipov, General Yashin, who came to the General Staff from the Rocket Forces... The list of those dismissed is quite long.

Old Structures Said To Oppose Reforms

PM1812110791 Moscow MOSCOW NEWS
in English No. 48, 1-8 Dec 91 p 8

[Report by Igor Stadnik: "Army: 19-21 November: A Mini Putsch in the Defence Ministry"]

[Text] Strange things were happening in the Soviet Defence Ministry during those three days in November: the minister signed papers stating the contrary of what he had told the press and officials were appointed to high posts only to be dismissed the next day.

All that was caused by the work of the commission formed after the failed August coup out of political officers who had been dismissed by hardliners. The commission dealt with reforming the system of political education in the army. Chaired by Dmitriy Volkogonov, the commission was supposed to discuss candidates for the new committee charged with military education before November 20. The list of candidates was to be endorsed by the defence minister.

Minister and Marshal Shaposhnikov stated during the November 19 news conference to sum up the commission's work that all appointments would be made from their list of candidates. The very same day the minister signed an order appointing persons of whom none, with the exception of proposed chairman Colonel General Gennadiy Stefanovskiy, were on the list proposed by the commission.

Right there and then Stefanovskiy disbanded the commission—something the defence minister was supposed to do. The whole exercise was designed to show reformers that the structures they had evolved would be manned by those who would frustrate all reform within the army. The action was timed for November 20, when leader of army political reform Dmitriy Volkogonov was flying to Britain for medical treatment. He learned of the move before he caught the plane; it is said there were tears in his eyes. Before leaving he sent a note to the minister: "I ask you to cancel the appointments. The commission has the power to propose its own candidates."

The rest of the commission did some investigation into this strange and hasty command. They found that the list of candidates had been submitted to the Main Personnel Department (MPD) by Stefanovskiy. Within hours the corresponding order was drafted and handed to Defence Minister Shaposhnikov for endorsement. Given the fact that all papers produced by the commission used to be shuffled for a month and a half or longer from one military bureaucrat to the next, the haste pointed to a concerted action by top army bureaucrats.

Discovering the fraud, Shaposhnikov cancelled his previous order. The commission continues work but the scandal in the Defence Ministry is not over by any means. The most important thing is not that the minister was handed a falsified document for endorsement. It has been found that top army bureaucracy is left to its own devices. In the past it was controlled by the Central Committee. Now there is no one to control it. The MPD can appoint anyone to any position.

The three days in November showed that there are military structures which used to put a brake on army reform and now directly oppose it. Apparently top bureaucrats within the Defence Ministry have the power to appoint to key positions men who, unlike the inept leaders of the August putsch, are capable of a successful coup.

Volkogonov's deputy in the commission, Vladimir Lopatin, said this about the mini putsch: "The whole concept of recruitment of personnel for the Defence Ministry should be altered immediately. It should be on a competitive basis, and the reform should be drafted outside the Defence Ministry. The present system will never agree to fold up, it will fight for survival."

Baltic Affairs

States Ask Industrialized Countries for Help

*LD1312150391 Riga Radio Riga Network
in Latvian 1000 GMT 12 Dec 91*

[Text] Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia yesterday turned to the Group of 24 most industrially developed countries to request extra assistance, reports the European Community. Meeting with the Group of 24 states and international financial institutions, official representatives of the Baltic states expounded the need for economic assistance over the medium term. The Executive Committee of the European Community announced that the group's request will be examined in the near future. No further details were related, nor would official representatives comment on this.

In November the group agreed to organize a meeting to discuss the needs of the Baltic states.

NATO Security Conference in Vilnius Ends

*LD2312122791 Vilnius Radio Vilnius in English
0000 GMT 20 Dec 91*

[Text] An international seminar on Baltic security requirements ended in Vilnius today. For the first time, a seminar of this kind was held outside Western countries. Organized by the North Atlantic Assembly and the Lithuanian parliament, the event was attended by representatives of six NATO states, Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus, as well as specialists from Hungary, Poland, Sweden, and Finland. A group of Soviet military officials observed the work of the seminar as well.

In his opening speech the chairman of the Lithuanian parliament, Vytautas Landsbergis, said that the presence of the Soviet Army in Lithuania created a situation of instability in the republic. The participants of the seminar devoted the greatest share of time to the withdrawal of Soviet troops from the Baltic states.

Four Soviet divisions and anti-aircraft defense units are still unlawfully stationed in Lithuania, occupying 1.2 percent of the sovereign country's total territory, said member of the Lithuanian parliament, Mecys Laurinkus. According to him, Lithuania was still in the encirclement of Soviet defensive units, while the Soviet Northwestern Army Grouping was still directed against the states of Northwestern Baltic region. That's indicative not only in the name of the army group but also obvious from the offensive weaponry of the army units. By President Gorbachev's decree the former Baltic Military District was renamed as the Northwestern Army Grouping.

The Lithuanian delegation declared at the seminar that actually the former Soviet Baltic Military District had undergone no changes. The Baltic states suggested that the pullout of Soviet troops should be treated as an international European problem, and it looks like the demand of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia has not only been heard but also understood. But so far few can say

how the Soviet troops are to be pulled out. The Lithuanian and Estonian delegations demanded that the withdrawal be completed by the end of the next year, while Latvia maintained the plan could be one year longer.

The participants of the Vilnius seminar admitted that due to the uncertain situation in the former Soviet Union the Baltic states did not have a negotiating partner on the pullout of Soviet troops. Soviet military commanders heard much bitter criticism with regard to the Soviet Army. They gave an assurance that the Army respected the independence of the Baltic states, but would not take any action itself before political decisions were made. Meanwhile, (Boris Bolshokov), a member of the Russian parliament, said that an immediate pullout of Soviet troops would cause big dissatisfaction of the military, primarily owing to social problems. He observed that Russia had to begin negotiations with the Baltic states on the withdrawal of troops. In the opinion of the Russian representative, such talks could begin already next month.

The chairman of parliament, Vytautas Landsbergis, pointed out that Lithuania was still involved in a conflict against its will, and therefore would now like to be in the zone of NATO's political protection.

The Lithuanian delegation asked NATO member states and other Western countries to render the Russian Government financial aid, so that it could complete the withdrawal of Army troops from Lithuania in 1992. Lithuania also appealed to NATO countries to help acquire Western weapons for the Lithuanian army. The head of the Lithuanian delegation, Ceslovas Stankevicius, told to Radio Vilnius the reaction on the part of the participants of the seminar was prompt.

[Begin Stankevicius recording in Lithuanian with superimposed English translation] We immediately felt their reaction. It was both interest and benevolence. They are going to proceed in that direction as securitations [as heard] are of vital importance to Lithuania. At the seminar we had an opportunity to make sure that the West felt what our problems are, and that after the seminar they will be heard and understood. [end recording]

Dr. (John Barrett), from NATO's Disarmament and Arms Control Section, told Radio Vilnius that the Baltic states, fearing that the Soviet Army may be treated as legitimately present, were reluctant to let in the Western representatives, who under the CFE treaty signed last year could monitor Soviet troops in the Baltic states.

[Begin (Barrett) recording] From a NATO perspective we would very much like the Baltic states to become part of that treaty, because through, that as I'm repeating myself, through that we will have access to see that equipment. And that's where we stand, for the message that I've been bringing is that I think that if people use their imagination and are not totally ideologically driven, there is a possible solution and that would be that the Baltic states would join the treaty regime on a

political basis. They would offer their good offices to facilitate the implementation of the regime, without becoming necessarily legal partners to it. All that means, in normal everyday language, is that if some inspectors come to Vilnius, and then into Lithuanian territory to look at the Soviet military bases, the Lithuanian authorities would say sure, come on, we'd be delighted to have you here, and maybe you could share with us some of your information that you've been able to obtain. And I think that that would be an arrangement that could be worked out. What that means in this situation is that we would be more encouraged to see some recognition by the Baltic states that if they could play a role in the CFE and its implementation that would help us in looking at the stability—military stability—across all of Europe, and in doing that, this would not prejudice the case for Soviet withdrawal. So you could have, say, two goods instead of just one. [end recording]

Officials on Withdrawal Timetable

OW2012015891 Moscow BALTFAX in English
1905 GMT 19 Dec 91

[Transmitted by KYODO]

[Text] An international seminar on Baltic security closed in Lithuania, and one of its key subjects was the withdrawal of Soviet troops from the area. BF [BALTFAX] asked the participants about how much it would take to withdraw Soviet troops from Lithuania.

It is realistic to expect the pullout to be completed in two years, said Dietrich Gehschel, Major-General of the German army and deputy director of the NATO headquarters planning division.

The troops can be pulled out within a year, said Audrijus Butkjavicius. He also expressed confidence that the former Soviet Union would reduce its armed forces soon and the first reductions must be in Lithuania. The Soviet troops in Lithuania may be abolished. He also said that a total of 6000 Soviet commissioned officers were in Lithuania who did not have homes in the republic.

Soviet Colonel-General Valeriy Mironov, commander of the Northwestern Army Group, emphasized that the Soviet military pullout was natural. He said 5 years was a realistic period.

Landsbergis Stresses Withdrawal

LD2212122191 Vilnius Radio Vilnius
International Service in Lithuanian 0200 GMT
20 Dec 91

[Excerpts] The North Atlantic assembly ended its work in Vilnius today. Speaking at the North Atlantic assembly seminar today, Boris Bolshakov, deputy chairman of the defense committee of the Russian Supreme Soviet, stressed that there should be no haste in pulling out the troops from the Baltic states since that might cause great dissatisfaction of the officers. [passage omitted]

Vytautas Landsbergis reaffirmed today at the Lithuanian parliament Lithuania's stand that all the Soviet troops must leave Lithuania in 1992. He was commenting on the statement by Konstantin Kobets, chairman of the military reform committee of the Soviet Union's State Council, that the pullout of troops from the Baltic states could not be started before 1994. This Soviet official said this in an interview with the IZVESTIYA daily in Moscow. Vytautas Landsbergis drew attention to the fact that the Soviet troops were already to have been withdrawn from Vilnius and expressed the hope that this would take place very soon.

Withdrawal Hinges on Treaties

LD2212120191 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network
in Lithuanian 2000 GMT 19 Dec 91

[Text] Today, on the last day of the North Atlantic assembly session, its participants visited the Soviet Army's military base in Vilnius, in the northern townlet. Colonel General Valeriy Mironov, commander of the Northwestern Army Group, and Colonel Valeriy Frolov, commander of the division deployed here, acquainted the guests with the living conditions of the soldiers and officers. The guests were shown the division's weapons and hardware. Mironov said that the Soviet Army in the Baltic states would not build any objects. Funds are allocated to complete the construction of houses. Col. Gen. Mironov told ELTA that the Soviet Army will withdraw from the Baltic states only after political solutions and the signing of interstate treaties. These documents must contain the withdrawal dates. Mironov also assured that, according to his order, no larger military exercises would be held in the Baltic states.

Deputy Addresses Assembly

LD2212023291 Vilnius Radio Vilnius
International Service in Lithuanian 0200 GMT
18 Dec 91

[Text] Mecys Laurinkus, Lithuanian parliament deputy, told the North Atlantic assembly seminar participants that available information indicates that four Soviet military divisions are stationed in Lithuania: two airborne divisions, one a combat division stationed at Kazlu Ruda, the other a training division stationed in (Ruchla); a motor rifle division, deployed in Vilnius; and a marine infantry division, deployed in Klaipeda. Laurinkus' report notes that military air force and air defense units are deployed in another five Lithuanian rayons, as well as a great number of support units deployed on Lithuania's whole territory. The area illegally occupied by the Soviet troops illegally deployed on Lithuanian territory totals 68,000 hectares, 1.2 percent of the sovereign state's entire territory. The headquarters of Soviet military formations and assault military units are deployed at eight main Lithuanian cities. There are even 32 large military installations in Vilnius, among them explosive storehouses situated in densely populated residential areas of the city. There is great concern over the concentration of Soviet troops at the Lithuanian

border. Vilnius is practically surrounded by concentrations of troops, not counting the troops in Vilnius itself. Lithuania is surrounded by Soviet assault troops. The strategic assault character of the Soviet northwest military formation against the Baltic countries is being preserved, as proved by the presence of assault weapons and the fact that the Armed Forces units deployed in Kaliningrad Oblast are left in the joint combat structure of the northwest military formation. A need for new security guarantees after the Baltic countries won back their independence was stressed in Mecys Laurinkus' report. These guarantees could be created if the Baltic states became the states of the region of trust and European security. Mecys Laurinkus stressed Lithuanian leaders' demands for Soviet units illegally deployed on the Republic of Lithuania's territory, the main factor of destabilization, to withdraw.

Estonia

Minister: Nuclear Arms 'Still' in Republic

LD2212112191 Riga Radio Riga Network
in Latvian 1831 GMT 20 Dec 91

[Excerpts] As Radio Free Europe reported a couple of hours ago, Latvian Minister of Foreign Affairs Janis Jurkans announced at a sitting of the NATO coordinating council in Brussels that the Baltic states expect that the NATO alliance would assist them in freeing themselves from the presence of Soviet troops. [passage omitted]

Estonian Minister of Foreign Affairs Lennart Meri announced today in Brussels that it is possible that there are still Soviet nuclear weapons in the Baltic states.

Talks With USSR on Troop Removal To Continue

OW2112075591 Moscow BALTFAX in English
2000 GMT 20 Dec 91

[Transmitted by KYODO]

[Text] On December 19th in St. Petersburg there was a meeting of working groups on negotiations between Estonia and the USSR on problems related to removing Soviet troops from the Baltic state.

Ants Laaniots, currently fulfilling the post of chief of Estonian military headquarters, told "BALTFAX" that the sides discussed soldiers' social problems, their families and pensioners in the Soviet Defense Ministry. Security guarantees for the Navy and Air Force in Estonia were also discussed.

"I think that the Soviet side as in a state of confusion, since it did not know who to obey," Ants Laaniots said. He also stated that both sides agreed that for the present they would not publicize any details of the meeting.

Soviet Border Unit Withdraws 20 Dec

OW2212001591 Moscow BALTFAX in English
1500 GMT 21 Dec 91

[Transmitted by KYODO]

[Text] According to the Estonian State and Border Protection Department, 35 vehicles carrying personnel of one of the Soviet border units crossed the Latvian-Estonian frontier Friday [20 December] night and arrived in the city of Rakvere. The column will leave Estonia in the morning of December 22nd through the Narva border post.

Earlier, the Soviet border command asked the Estonian government's permission for the column to cross the republican territory. Close public attention to the troops' movements is explained by December 17 incident when about 850 Soviet draftees arrived in the republic without permission of the Estonian government.

Latvia

Riga Asks U.S. for Military Aid, Advisers

PM2312101791 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian
20 Dec 91 Union Edition p 1

[Untitled report from IZVESTIYA, TASS, INTERFAX, POSTFACTUM, RIA, REUTER roundup]

[Text] The Latvian Embassy in Washington has announced that Latvia has asked the United States to provide it with military equipment and the services of advisers on military questions and security problems.

The Latvian side attributes this appeal to "the growing instability in the Soviet Union."

Plans for 'Massive Military Maneuvers' Cited

LD2312220891 Riga Radio Riga International
in English 2130 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Text] Latvia's Parliamentary Commission for Interior and Defense Matters has announced that it has an unconfirmed information at its disposal that the Soviet Army plans to launch massive military maneuvers in Latvia just about the Christmas time this year. Until now, no official response has been received from the Baltic military headquarters.

Lithuania

Council Acknowledges Republics' Independence

OW2112062191 Moscow BALTFAX in English
1625 GMT 20 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Lithuania acknowledged the independence of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan,

Tajikistan, Georgia, Belarus and Azerbaijan. This decree was passed Friday [20 December] evening in the Lithuanian parliament.

Landsbergis, Military Commander on Withdrawal

*LD2112095991 Vilnius Radio Vilnius
in Lithuanian 0200 GMT 17 Dec 91*

[Text] Parliament Chairman Vytautas Landsbergis received today the commander of the Soviet North-western military group deployed in Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, Lt. Gen. Valeriy Mironov. He also received several high-ranking Soviet officers. The main topic of the discussion was political and economic aspects of the pullout of the Soviet Army from Lithuania.

The Lithuanian side stressed that the Soviet Army should avoid any contact with political forces hostile to the republic. This also should be said about the possible sale of weapons to the terrorist antistate underground.

Chairman Seeks Commonwealth Help on Withdrawal

*LD2212071491 Vilnius Radio Vilnius in English
2230 GMT 20 Dec 91*

[Text] The chairman of the Lithuanian parliament, Vytautas Landsbergis, has sent letters to the leaders of Ukraine, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Russia in which he notes with satisfaction that the Commonwealth of Independent States has taken upon itself the settlement of problems related to the Armed Forces of the former Soviet Union. The head of the Lithuanian parliament writes that he is confident the stand taken by the member states of the Commonwealth will contribute to the solution of concrete issues of the Soviet troops' withdrawal from the Baltic states. Vytautas Landsbergis speaks out against the Soviet military stationed in Lithuania having any contacts with the armed Bolshevik underground in the republic. He also points out in his letters that, by the decision of the Baltic Council adopted in October, Soviet troops had to be withdrawn from the capital cities of Vilnius, Riga, and Tallinn by 1 December, but the leadership of the former Soviet Union had in no way reacted to the decision. The letters accentuate that an inspection of Soviet military bases by Lithuanian authorities would enable the Republic of Lithuania to be responsible for the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons. Vytautas Landsbergis reminds the leaders of the Commonwealth that, following the Soviet occupation of Lithuania in 1940, the Army of the republic was fully destroyed. Therefore, now the losses should be compensated for by modern weapons.

[Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian at 1000 GMT on 20 December adds that Landsbergis' letters also "described problems examined at the North Atlantic assembly seminar and proposed to discuss them."]

Landsbergis Address on Domestic Affairs

*LD2212092191 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network
in Lithuanian 1400 GMT 20 Dec 91*

[Radio address by Vytautas Landsbergis, chairman of the Lithuanian Supreme Council, on 20 December in Vilnius—recorded]

[Text] Dear listeners, an important, maybe the last, stage is approaching in our difficult path toward a complete and firm independence. It is the withdrawal of the Soviet Army.

An international event—the seminar of the NATO countries' parliamentary assembly organized by our Ministry of National Defense and attended by parliamentarians, state officials, and high-ranking military leaders of the former Soviet Union, now of Russia, from Moscow and Riga—was held these past few days in Vilnius.

For the first time, such a businesslike talk was taking place and ways were sought on how to solve this international and, one can boldly say, European problem. Both Europe and Russia understand that this problem must be solved and cannot be postponed by some talks.

Thus, in this sphere the matters are good, many of our international affairs are good. The Soviet Union virtually no longer exists, its Army does not exist—military threat from that side is declining. There is greater stability, greater trust. Of course, if some unforeseen fascist coups do not take place in Moscow or in St. Petersburg where various activists and efforts exist. [sentence as heard]

But where a new state [word indistinct] led and influenced by the democratic forces, we can feel from that side more security and stability.

Yesterday's forces are working in a very active manner for destabilization. I am not going to talk this time about our domestic affairs, where this work is very active, too, but we see very well how this work is progressing in the conflict with Poland. Attempts are being made to do something by various means. For instance, such an event, not an event because it has been foreseen, planned, and provoked—the congestion of passengers in Grodno and [word indistinct] at the Vilnius railway station.

We have almost agreed, the railway is being brought to order, and maybe we will see a train moving from the Sestokay station from Lithuania directly to Poland, but not via Belarus. It is good that the rail link interrupted by the Soviets is now being restored. But while the main flow of passengers on the route Vilnius-Warsaw is via Grodno, here we had a true subversion by the Inturist or Intertrans. Several times more tickets have been sold than any train could accommodate passengers, and at the same time, a dirty deal and political subversion have been accomplished. People dissatisfied with service start protesting, start spontaneously, or, maybe, are being encouraged by somebody. Blocking the movement of

other trains can quickly result in an accident or some political interference with the use of force. It is good that we managed to cope with this conflict yesterday. But who is going to answer for this? I think that the office that has done this will have to bear a very severe responsibility. I do not know how it will be possible to demand this, but our rather sluggish law and order bodies will have to do this.

This could be yet another effort at the incitement that is taking place these days in the Polish Sejm where a resolution on the alleged discrimination of the Poles, where impermissible remarks are being made about Lithuania's policy in a country where the [word indistinct] is not in order.

We know how easy it is to communicate some incited extreme fury against another nation by something that has been for many years and is now supporting [words indistinct] the KGB, the CPSU, and the former Polish PZPR. All goodies are coming from the same pot.

Of course, they hope that, maybe, they will succeed in provoking some fiercer statements by the Lithuanians against the Poles. Then they will be able to enjoy it—look how they behave..

And the task of our political culture, the culture of behavior and of the whole society, is, as before, not to give in to provocations. When attempts are made in the press and statements by the Polish leaders, including a tactless element, like pressure or threat, interference in internal affairs, we manage to reply firmly but calmly. But the society itself must adhere to this stance and by no means must not identify our Poles, residing in Vilnius, Vilnius Rayon, or somewhere else, in Kaunas or near Kaunas, with a certain group of people who, having lost their posts, having lost the possibility to oppress their subordinates or people who have other views, are now pretending to be the defenders of their compatriots. They are the organizers of the Soviet Union's referendum, but today pretend to not hear anything about somebody wishing to sever the Vilnius land from Lithuania.

Our task is to distinguish between those former party functionaries and other functionaries engaged in this work inciting destabilization, and our citizens, Lithuanian Poles, who almost all support Lithuanian citizenship and wish to be loyal to the Republic of Lithuania.

Yesterday and today we exchanged letters with Polish President Lech Walesa. When the letter by the Polish president is published, I will publish my reply. I believe that our relations will remain normal and will develop in the spirit of friendship and constructive cooperation. Especially, when [words indistinct] when the leadership will be formed in our neighboring country. [passage indistinct]

Landsbergis Addresses Sajudis Congress

LD2412103991 Vilnius Radio Vilnius International Service in Lithuanian 0200 GMT 24 Dec 91

[Text] Lithuanian parliament chairman Vytautas Landsbergis, speaking 22 December at the congress of the Lithuanian Sajudis, pointed out that the Commonwealth of Independent States being created may pose threats to Lithuania similar to those posed by the former Soviet Union. According to him, if the Commonwealth has a single border guarded from a single center, if it has a single army and a single currency, it will be very, or astonishingly, similar to the former Soviet Union.

Vytautas Landsbergis stressed that Lithuania so far does not have control of its eastern or western borders, but it should be introduced as soon as possible.

In solving Lithuania's domestic affairs, he urged recognition of the fact that the situation is not yet stable and many dangers remain.

The increasing pressure on Lithuania from the south, from Poland, was called a new political phenomenon by the parliament chairman. According to Vytautas Landsbergis, Polish actions are based on disinformation. They are being astonishingly coordinated with actions in Lithuania itself. In his opinion, there are encroachments on the integrity of Lithuania's lands.

Having reviewed dangers on Lithuania's path toward independence, Vytautas Landsbergis said that we have moved along a precipice. But he urged awareness of the fact that this path is still to be traversed. Each new government crisis in Lithuania could be as dangerous as last January's.

In publicly criticizing more than once former Prime Minister Kazimiera Prunskiene, Vytautas Landsbergis asserted that the whereabouts of the prime minister at that time, Albertas Simenas, were not known. Kazimiera Prunskiene attempted, not representing Lithuania's interests, to take over the leadership of the cabinet of ministers.

The parliament chairman again stressed in bitter words the responsibility of the workers of the press for the political and moral atmosphere and strictly dissociated himself from the attitude of revenge which echoed at the Sajudis congress. If the attitude of revenge is dominant, said Vytautas Landsbergis, he could not be the Sajudis honorary chairman or a Sajudis member.

The Sajudis, which went on for two days the previous weekend and the whole day yesterday, concluded its work.

Prime Minister Pledges Support for Military

PM1912104791 Vilnius EKHO LITVY in Russian 10 Dec 91 p 1

[ELTA report: "On Questions of Strengthening Territorial Protection"]

[Text] Lithuanian Prime Minister Gediminas Vagnorius met with leaders of the Ministry of Territorial Defense, troop unit commanders, and other service chiefs in the government building. The prime minister cordially thanked everyone who first voluntarily joined the ranks of the homeland's defenders without fearing the temporary difficulties, undertook to organize the work of territorial protection, and displayed determination and self-possession during difficult days for the Lithuanian state.

The territorial protection services have also been encountering certain difficulties of late—shortage of

premises, warm uniforms, transportation and communications, and weapons. The Ministry of Territorial Protection itself, the prime minister noted, must display more initiative in resolving these burning questions. However, it is also clear that the Lithuanian troops are not being afforded the proper attention by other state departments, self-management units, enterprises, and trade organizations among others. The prime minister said that all the problems involved in strengthening Lithuanian troops, above all the border guard, will be settled in a businesslike and prompt manner. He stressed that the leadership of the Ministry of Territorial Protection must pay more attention to drafting recruits to active service in order to ensure that the planned territorial protection contingent is formed in a timely manner.

Interrepublic Affairs

Leaders Hold News Conference on Commonwealth

Minsk To Add 'Final Touches'

PM2312194591 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian
24 Dec 91 Union Edition p 2

[V. Kononenko report: "Process To Form Commonwealth Will Be Completed in Minsk"]

[Text] The Alma-Ata meeting was a worthy development of the Minsk agreements. During the week groups of experts representing the independent states of the former Union were at work, and this ensured the prompt adoption of a package of key documents signed by the heads of state. This was announced by G. Burbulis, RSFSR first vice premier, who gave a news conference on Zubovskiy Avenue 23 December, together with Vice Premier S. Shakhrai and Foreign Minister A. Kozyrev.

The first vice premier emphasized that the adopted protocol to the agreement on the Commonwealth of Independent States represents the most acceptable form of the accession to the Commonwealth on equal terms of the eight independent states. It will become an integral part of the agreement on the formation of the Commonwealth of Independent States. Of great importance, he went on, is also the agreement adopted by four states—Belarus, Kazakhstan, Russia, and the Ukraine—on joint measures concerning the control and command of nuclear arms which are causing particular concern in the world. These states are passing to Russia individual control over the nuclear button. The final touches to the organizational and structural shape of the Commonwealth of Independent States are to be added at a meeting of heads of independent states in Minsk 30 December.

Replying to an IZVESTIYA correspondent's question, G. Burbulis disclosed that the mechanism for the hand-over of power was not discussed in detail in Alma-Ata. As for the time and form of the USSR president's laying down of his powers, his latest television interview testifies to a correct and painless solution of this question. Currently a meeting between B. Yeltsin and M. Gorbachev is under way at which what was achieved in Alma-Ata is being explained.

S. Shakhrai in turn disclosed that collaboration between the parliaments of the member states of the Commonwealth of Independent States will probably take place in the form of a parliamentary assembly.

The news conference participants pointed out specifically: The situation in Georgia as regards observance of human rights is giving rise to questions; NATO is safeguarding stability in Europe and the world, and therefore Russia's desire to join this mechanism is natural; the procedure for collaboration among members of the Commonwealth as regards the observance by them of their obligations will be elaborated in Minsk.

Burbulis on Gorbachev-Yeltsin Meet

LD2312195191 Moscow All-Union Radio First
Program Radio-1 Network in Russian 1700 GMT
23 Dec 91

[Remarks by Gennadiy Burbulis, first deputy prime minister of the RSFSR, at a news conference in Moscow on 23 December—recorded]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Boris Nikolayevich had the following in mind: For the near future, any kind of central bodies envisaging a personal role are ruled out in the Commonwealth. It is important to stress this, including, perhaps, again and again, to Mikhail Sergeyevich directly. Everything else is at the level of lofty political morality, and at the level of that human dignity which today we are, with difficulty, yet all together nevertheless, acquiring.

We are categorically against the traditional communist settling of accounts with predecessors, and the mindless consigning of our history to oblivion, including those who were directly involved in it.

I may just inform you that at present, a routine meeting is presently under way between Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin and Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev—a meeting to consider the results of Alma-Ata and explain the apparatus and the machinery finally to determine this situation.

Gorbachev 'Will Not Be Jobless'

LD2312122191 Moscow TASS in English
1208 GMT 23 Dec 91

[By TASS diplomatic correspondents Sergey Staroselskiy and Alexei Tabachnikov]

[Text] Moscow December 23—"We regard Mikhail Gorbachev's activity with respect and are determined to avoid any slighting, let alone pejorative, assessments of our past," Russian First Deputy Prime Minister Gennadiy Burbulis said today.

"We are now leaving behind the communist regime," Burbulis told the news conference. "The personal fates of the politicians who played direct role in its dismantling will not be harmed in any way."

According to Burbulis, Gorbachev "will not be jobless," but the specific area of his activity and the form will depend on him.

Commonwealth Organization Discussed

OW2312203591 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1809 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] At the press conference held at the press centre of the Russian Federation's Foreign Ministry on Monday [23 December], the Commonwealth states' consent to

allow Russia to act as the sole controller of the nuclear button was named among the most vitally important achievements of the Alma-Ata talks. The press conference was given by first vice-chairman of the Russian Government, Mr. Gennadiy Burbulis, Vice-Premier Sergey Shakhrai and Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev.

Special emphasis was laid on the wish of the Ukraine and Belarus to renounce their nuclear status.

The speakers noted that although Kazakhstan had announced its plans to do away with tactical nuclear weapons, it would continue to keep strategic nuclear forces in its territory which would be controlled by the Russian Federation.

The audience was informed that "this situation will be finalized" and the results of the Alma-Ata talks summed up during the talk between Boris Yeltsin and Mikhail Gorbachev in the Kremlin on Monday.

Asked about Mikhail Gorbachev's political future, Mr. Burbulis said that the Commonwealth did not envisage central bodies similar to the presidential post. "We respect Mikhail Gorbachev," he said and added that the people who were involved in dismantling the totalitarian system would not be persecuted by the new bodies.

The speakers said that Armenia, Azerbaijan and Moldova had promised to put an end to discrimination and violence in their territories and ensure stability.

Answering an IF [INTERFAX] question, Mr. Burbulis stressed that the Commonwealth charter which is expected to be adopted in Minsk by the Commonwealth heads of state on December 30, would include provisions preventing non-democratic states from joining the Commonwealth. He also noted that it would be inexpedient to lay any claims on the former members of the Union or demand anything of them, in view of the fact that anti-democratic traditions could have been inherited by individual republics from the totalitarian system.

Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev added that denial of admission would not be the only way of demonstrating the Commonwealth's attitude to anti-democratic states.

He said that the decision to put the embassies of the former Union under the aegis of Russia was not at all detrimental to the interests of the Commonwealth member-states. "We shall act, with due account taken of all members," said Mr. Kozyrev.

Answering IF questions, Mr. Burbulis said that the republics constituting the Russian Federation had not expressed any protest to the government concerning the fact that the Alma-Ata agreements had been signed without their direct participation.

Kozyrev on Foreign Apparatus

LD2312133591 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1214 GMT 23 Dec 91

[By TASS diplomatic correspondents Sergey Staroselskiy and Aleksey Tabachnikov]

[Text] Moscow, 23 Dec TASS—The process of transferring property, including the embassies of the former USSR, to Russian jurisdiction, will not under any circumstances encroach on the interests of other independent states, Andrey Kozyrev, RSFSR minister of foreign affairs, stated at a news conference today.

At the Alma-Ata meeting, he reported, an accord was reached about the fact that the embassies and the ambassadors, and the whole foreign political apparatus will, for now, be under Russian administration, but their activities will be directed toward protecting the interests of all the independent states. According to Andrey Kozyrev, there is complete mutual understanding between the ministers of foreign affairs of the Commonwealth of Independent States on this issue. The forms for the further participation of the former Union republics in the foreign political process will be set out on 30 December at a meeting between the leaders of the independent states in Minsk.

Kozyrev on Georgia, NATO

LD2312181491 Moscow All-Union Radio Mayak Network in Russian 1530 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Text] The most dramatic events are currently unfolding in Georgia. What is the Russian leadership's position on this today? Answering this question today at the press center of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, RSFSR Foreign Affairs Minister Andrey Kozyrev had this to say, among other things:

[Begin Kozyrev recording] The situation in Georgia, as you know, is complicated by the fact that in addition to us, international observers, too—experts and governments of many countries—have questions to put to the Georgian leadership in connection with the observance of human rights, the rights of ethnic minorities, the situation in South Ossetia, and so on. As I understand it, dramatic events are taking place there. No doubt we cannot directly intervene in these events in a sovereign state—this is the internal business of Georgia—but of course we are in sympathy with those forces that are in favor of democratic development and the restoration of a situation that would make it possible to guarantee human rights and the rights of ethnic minorities. For our part, we will closely follow the development of events, and as soon as the situation becomes clear we will embark upon the appropriate actions in keeping with the generally recognized norms of international law. [end recording]

Let's move to international problems of a more global character, if one may put it like that. It is a question of the confrontation over many years between the countries

of the so-called Eastern bloc—first and foremost the USSR—and NATO. How are relations with NATO going to be built now, after Alma-Ata? In this connection Andrey Kozyrev had this to say at the same news conference at the RSFSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

[Begin Kozyrev recording] I think the message sent by Boris Nikolayevich to the latest Brussels meeting clearly says that we do not regard NATO as an aggressive military bloc, but view it as one of the mechanisms of stability in Europe and in the world as a whole. Our desire to cooperate with this mechanism and to join it are therefore natural. There is a sum of problems, threats, let's say, which unfortunately are not disappearing. Take, for example, the aggression by Iraq, which has been opposed by the whole world. Unfortunately such things cannot be ruled out and some political alliance of states would be very appropriate in order to prevent situations of this kind, terrorism, and other sources of instability, if only on its own territory and within the framework of its responsibility. Then, a common problem which faces us and the NATO countries is the determination of a new place and role for the Armed Forces of the two sides which were created in order to face each other. These are still enormous military machines for which an appropriate place has to be found to cooperate in the conversion of military production and to cooperate in finding their own role in civilian societies, as in our own country. For example, you now see the Army quickly finding its place in Russia and in the other sovereign independent states and in relations between them as an element of the civil society. Finally there is the concept of the creation of a zone of security and cooperation from Vancouver to Vladivostok. I believe that here, NATO is playing a role that is positive and by no means insignificant. [end recording]

Let me add that Andrey Kozyrev, in saying all of this, stressed that he was speaking only about the position of Russia.

Filatov on Importance of Nuclear Accord

LD2312185991 Moscow All-Union Radio First Program Radio-1 Network in Russian 1700 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Text] Sergey Filatov, first deputy chairman of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet, considers the agreement on measures concerning nuclear weapons to be the most important of the documents signed in Alma-Ata. He expressed this view at a news conference today.

[Begin Filatov recording] Not only have the basic principles of non-proliferation and non-use of nuclear weapons been defined—some of these are already enshrined in international agreements—the direction toward reduction of these nuclear weapons has also been defined. Two republics, the Ukraine and Belarus, simply said that they will aim for complete elimination of nuclear weapons on their territory.

The most important thing achieved at the conference was that the participants, or the heads of state on whose territory nuclear weapons are today located, signed an agreement entrusting their use—God forbid that this should ever happen of course—they entrusted the control of the button which is of particular concern to everyone today to the head of state of the Russian Federation. This is not only trust in the highest degree, it is a solution to the very agonizing problem of how nuclear weapons are to be concentrated or distributed on our territories. This shows that on this question there will be a single united command and a single leadership and a single use if this is ever needed, although as I say, God forbid that this should ever happen; a single use of this button, by agreement with the leaders of these four.

I think this will greatly stabilize the situation in the world, especially as regards trust in the Commonwealth. I think that to some extent it makes the Commonwealth a considerably more serious affair in the eyes of the world community, because it is evident that the intentions of the leaders, heads of state are really serious as regards the defense of the whole space of all the 11 states which have joined this Commonwealth. [end recording]

Regional Affairs

'Hungry' Moscow Marchers Demand Air Time

LD2212142191 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1300 GMT 22 Dec 91

[Text] On 22 December, today, a march of hungry people was held in Moscow, with representatives of various political parties and tendencies taking part. According to our information, not more than 10,000 people gathered at the Exhibition of Achievements of the National Economy in Moscow. And a protest meeting was held at the main entrance, proposing that the head of the Russian Government should jump in front of a speeding train.

Among those who spoke were representatives of the Russian Communist Workers' Party, emissaries from St. Petersburg, continuing to call their city Leningrad, and several deputies of rayon soviets. Mr. Zhirinovskiy also turned up among the ranks of the hungry, not to mention other representatives of the opposition comrades.

The demonstrators, in a belligerent mood, demanded that the State Committee for Television and Radio Broadcasting be purged of the scourge of pornography and the demagogic lie and the demonstrators proposed that they be granted air time. With this aim, the march of hungry people moved to Ostankino, where it blockaded all the entrances and exits, while chanting: Give us air time! Although, in my opinion, hungry people should first ask for bread, not air time.

Threaten To Storm TV Center

LD2212142691 Moscow All-Union Radio First Program Radio-1 Network in Russian 1300 GMT 22 Dec 91

[Text] So far today there has been no shooting in Moscow, fortunately. But the situation in the city, especially in the area of our Ostankino TV center, is very troubled. As we have already reported, a demonstration began this morning near the USSR Exhibition of Economic Achievements. The organizers are Communist groupings in Moscow. Our correspondent visited the scene and reported that about 2,000 demonstrators had gathered there. Most of them are elderly people who do not want to talk to correspondents. Some of them are clearly in a hysterical state. There are many red flags and portraits of Lenin and Stalin.

The demonstrators were addressed by Deputies Alksnis, Sukhov, and others. Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin, Aleksandr Nikolayevich Yakovlev, and Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev, among others, were accused of destroying the Union and bringing about general poverty and a substantial fall in living standards.

After leaving the exhibition grounds the demonstrators headed for the headquarters of the Ostankino TV and Radio Company. They are demanding live air time on TV's First Program. Otherwise, they are threatening to storm the building.

St. Petersburg Communist Rally Demands Action

LD2212185191 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1440 GMT 22 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Mikhail Utyanskiy]

[Text] St. Petersburg, 22 December (TASS)—The first rally in St. Petersburg devoted to the problems of the social protection of the working people was held today on Palace Square. It was organized by representatives of working associations, the United Front of Working People, and Communists from the Russian Communist Workers' Party and the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks.

More than 2,000 participants in the rally demanded that the leadership of Russia and the city prohibit price hikes, the impoverishment of the people, and unemployment, and act to halt the country's collapse. The speakers favored the restoration of the rights to labor, rest, free education, and health care guaranteed by the state.

Viktor Tyulkin, chairman of the Russian Communist Workers' Party, stated that a situation has arisen in which those on top cannot govern the state for the benefit of the people, while those below do not want a further worsening of their lot. Gennadiy Klementyev, one of the speakers at the rally, cautioned supporters of the deregulation of prices with Lenin's words: Don't touch the prices of working people's vital necessities. He advocated the introduction of a state of emergency with

regard to food. Nina Andreyeva, leader of the Bolsheviks' Party, stated that "Yeltsin's shock threatens to turn into genocide.... The reformers have led us to the brink of civil war." She summoned workers' collectives to a general political strike.

Oppose 'Yeltsinization' of Country

LD2312193691 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 0806 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Text] [Announcer] The agreement signed in Alma-Ata by leaders of 11 sovereign states continues to be the focus of attention for the world media, politicians, businessmen, and cultural personalities. The overwhelming majority of them welcome the agreement. The slogans heard at a meeting of the hunger lines held in Moscow sounded a manifestly discordant note. A leaflet distributed there said: The anti-Soviet presidents have brought the country to unheard of shame. Insane prices, hunger, and a humiliating search for food: This is what bogus democracy has given the people.

The organizers of the meeting demanded live air time for Svetlana Goryacheva and Igor Slobodkin who, they claimed, were ready to set out their programs for leading the country out of crisis and for academics Sergeyev, Yakushev, and Yerechin who, the organizers of the meeting assure us, have drawn up a program for a strong national economy and a simultaneous reduction in prices.

Last week RSFSR People's Deputy Dmitriy Volkogonov made a statement behind the scenes at the Russian Supreme Soviet in which he said: "Not everyone realizes at the moment that the worst danger is not the economy or interethnic relations. A huge neo-fascist, neo-Stalinist danger is looming, growing, in our country. If millions of deprived, hungry people take to the streets, neo-fascists will try to take advantage of them."

On Sunday [22 December] we had confirmation of these words. People were fooled into taking to the streets. It is impossible to end the economic crisis and reduce prices at the same time. The organizers of the meeting know this perfectly well, just as they know perfectly well that the people who gathered that day in front of the Moscow television center did not include anyone who knew the slightest thing about the subtleties of economics.

Dmitriy Volkogonov's fears also were borne out by events on the streets of St Petersburg. A bloc of pro-Communist and nationalist groupings also held a meeting of the hunger lines, this time on Palace Square. Denis Gurinskiy reports:

[Gurinskiy] The workers' protests, which St Petersburg's Bolsheviks have been pressing for over the last two weeks, have begun. At their meeting about 3,000 working people and pensioners urged the citizens of the former Soviet Union to rise up against their republican regimes. The theme of the protests was: Prevent the Yeltsinization of the entire country. The protesters

called for the removal of leading politicians and the resurrection of socialist economic structures. According to Viktor Tyulkin, a leader of the organizing committee, these demands should be implemented by the formation of committees at all enterprises in the St. Petersburg region to organize protests by the working people of Leningrad. The need for such a laborious campaign was justified and explained by Nina Andreyeva, general secretary of the newly resurrected All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks.

[Begin Andreyeva recording] In Belovezhskaya Pushcha recently the Gang of Three—Yeltsin, Kravchuk, and Shushkevich—announced the end of the union and signed an unconstitutional treaty. They hastened to report to Bush in Washington how easy it had been for them to implement the plans Hitler failed to accomplish. Later they were joined by the ruling bourgeois nationalists of the Central Asian and other former republics.

The base conspiracy against the Soviet people was personally monitored and approved by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker. The country has not known anything so shameful and humiliating since the Tatar and Mongol invasion. [end recording]

[Gurinskiy] After expressing a wish that the working class would help to ensure that Gorbachev, Yeltsin, Gaydar, Popov, and Sobchak are put on trial as soon as possible, Andreyeva defined the main task of the present time.

[Begin Andreyeva recording] Today the only way to prevent a tragedy is for the working people to hold a general political strike [cheers] in order to press home their utterly resolute demands for the resignation of all bourgeois, nationalist, and mafia structures of power at the center and in the localities. [end recording]

[Gurinskiy] So, the Winter Palace again has witnessed the sight of proletarians who are eager to build a shining future, but this time only for themselves.

This is Denis Gurinskiy in St Petersburg for the news service of Radio Rossii.

[Announcer] Owing to such reports, pro-Communist publications and other journals that proudly call themselves patriotic naturally will accuse us of committing all the sins under the sun, but in doing so, they will not mention the fact that we, like all other fellow citizens, have to take our turn in the same hunger lines.

Sobchak Favors Speedy Creation of Commonwealth
LD2012202691 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1525 GMT 20 Dec 91

[By TASS diplomatic correspondent Sergey Petukhov]

[Text] Moscow, 20 Dec (TASS)—The signing of the agreement at the meeting of the heads of independent states in Alma-Ata will prepare good new ground for the restoration of economic links between the former Union

republics, Anatoliy Sobchak, mayor of St. Petersburg, stated today. He spoke at the British Embassy on the occasion of the signing of an agreement between the government of that country and the St. Petersburg mayor's office regarding the delivery of fodder to Leningrad Oblast.

Anatoliy Sobchak noted that he always has expressed himself in favor of the speediest possible conclusion of a Union treaty. Now, he said, when the talks about concluding the treaty have reached a dead end and a new path has been found by means of the creation of a Commonwealth of Independent States, [CIS], he is in favor of this process developing as quickly as possible. The main thing, the mayor emphasized, is that the CIS agreement should be implemented and should not remain just on paper.

The situation developing in the country, Anatoliy Sobchak, continued, poses an extremely dangerous threat to the life of our society and to the development of democracy and, therefore, he welcomes any move geared toward reaching agreements and then putting them into practice.

Speaking about the importance of succession of authority, Anatoliy Sobchak noted that during the transitional period it is essential to preserve the post of USSR president. Anatoliy Sobchak emphasized that invalidating the activities of the Union bodies of authority needs to be carried out in the proper legal and constitutional fashion.

To Revive Economic Ties

LD2212050491 Moscow TASS in English 1646 GMT 20 Dec 91

[By TASS diplomatic correspondent Sergey Petukhov]

[Text] Moscow December 20 TASS—The new Commonwealth to be created in Alma-Ata will revive economic ties between former Soviet Republics, Anatoliy Sobchak, the democratic mayor of St. Petersburg said today in the British Embassy, where he signed an agreement with the British Government on fodder grain shipments to the Leningrad region, a territory around St. Petersburg which has retained the old name of Leningrad.

Sobchak has always been a staunch supporter of a new union. "Now that talks on the Union are in a deadlock and the new Commonwealth is emerging, I hope the process will go fast and the Commonwealth becomes a reality", Sobchak said.

The mayor said he welcomes any step which can avert "the deadly threat" now facing society.

Sobchak believes the post of Soviet president should be preserved during the transitional period. Decisions to eliminate Union structures should be taken in full compliance with the Constitution, he said.

St. Petersburg Official Comments on Commonwealth*LD2412115591 Moscow TASS in English
0854 GMT 24 Dec 91*

[By TASS correspondent Lyudmila Fomicheva]

[Text] St. Petersburg December 24 (TASS)—“I believe that the results of the Alma-Ata meeting will be primarily of benefit to Russia because it has always been the main appendage of the centre while its sovereignty was only a declaration. Genuine sovereignty has been obtained only now that Russia has been put on an equal footing with the other former republics of the Union. This event will mark the beginning of a revival of Russia,” Aleksandr Belyakov, head of the Leningrad Region Administration, told TASS in comment on the signing of documents on the establishment of a Commonwealth of Independent States in Alma-Ata by 11 states of the former Soviet Union.

“Within the framework of cooperation—the emergence of a new Commonwealth is, first of all, the establishment of economic contacts—it is essential to give priority to the development of all forms of economic management, not politics,” Belyakov emphasised.

“Relations should be built horizontally, between regions, firms and private entrepreneurs. We have forgotten how to work creatively. For years, work has been virtually day-labour.

“There is no doubt that the new Commonwealth will need a coordinating body, not a governing one. I now fear only one thing: Russia is trying to take the place of the centre in the administration of the state and take everything upon itself.

“Many Union ministries are being transferred to the jurisdiction of Russia and create vertical structures, bypassing regional and territorial administrations. If Russia proceeds along this road, it will lag behind other founders of the new Commonwealth in democratic development,” Belyakov said.

St. Petersburg Greens Allege Nuclear Dumping*PM2412121691 Moscow MOSCOW NEWS in English
No 50, 15-22 Dec 91 p 2*

[Unattributed report: “St. Petersburg: Better for the Deputies To Be Mistaken”]

[Text] A group of deputies from the City Soviet demanded that the leaders of the inter-state committee for radiation control in the USSR immediately provide information about the situation in the area.

According to the official inquiry of deputies from the Greens some information has come to light about illegal operations for burying radioactive waste from other countries. A similar inquiry sent to the former Ministry of the Nuclear Power Industry of the USSR was ignored.

The deputies warned that if no effective measures are taken right now the region will soon face an ecological disaster.

Law on Kray, Oblast Level ‘Small Soviets’*PM2012093991 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA
in Russian 19 Dec 91 First Edition p 2*

[RSFSR Law “On Certain Questions Pertaining to Legal Regulation of the Activity of Kray and Oblast Soviets of People’s Deputies,” signed by RSFSR President B. Yeltsin and dated RSFSR House of the Soviets, Moscow, 5 December 1991]

[Text] The purpose of this law is to improve the conditions for organizing the work of kray and oblast soviets of people’s deputies.

Article 1. Kray and oblast soviets of people’s deputies elect a small soviet [malyy soviet] from among their members.

No more than one-fifth of the number of people’s deputies prescribed for the relevant kray or oblast soviet of people’s deputies are elected to the small soviet of the kray or oblast soviet of people’s deputies. The number of people’s deputies working in the small soviet on a permanent basis is autonomously determined by the soviet of people’s deputies.

The chairman of the kray or oblast soviet of people’s deputies and his deputies are ex officio members of the small soviet and organize its work.

The small soviet cannot include officials from the kray or oblast administration.

Article 2. The small soviet of the kray or oblast soviet of people’s deputies is to be elected no later than one month from the time that this law enters into force.

Article 3. A session of the small soviet is considered valid [pravomochnyy] if no less than two-thirds of its members take part in it.

The small soviet adopts decisions by a majority of the votes cast by the total number of members of the small soviet.

Article 4. The small soviet exercises all the powers of the kray or oblast soviet of people’s deputies during the period between the latter’s sessions.

The small soviet is not competent to resolve the following questions:

to consent to the institutions of proceedings against a people’s deputy, to dismiss a people’s deputy on the administration’s initiative, to transfer him or change his job without his consent, or to determine, in accordance with legislation, liability for nonperformance of deputy’s duties;

to elect or relieve of their posts the chairman of the soviet and his deputies, to hear reports on their activity;

to form, elect, or abolish permanent and other commissions, other soviet organs, or to change their composition;

to adopt or amend the soviet's standing orders;

to ratify the structure and staff of the soviet apparatus, expenditure on the upkeep of the soviet as a whole and the soviet's apparatus;

to express no confidence in the head of the relevant administration;

to ratify the leaders of administration organs in cases for which legislation makes provision;

to ratify plans and programs for the economic, social, and ecological development of the relevant territory, the budget, and reports on their implementation.

Article 5. The kray or oblast soviet of people's deputies is entitled to abrogate any small soviet decisions that contravene existing legislation and the soviet's decisions.

When electing the small soviet the kray or oblast soviet of people's deputies is entitled to abolish the soviet presidium or change its competence.

Article 6. If less than two-thirds of the number of people's deputies prescribed for the soviet in question attend the session of the kray or oblast soviet, the session is postponed until another time on the orders of the soviet chairman and people's deputies are informed in writing of the venue and time of the session. If less than two-thirds of the number of people's deputies take part in the work of the session on its second convocation, the session is considered valid provided a majority of the number of people's deputies prescribed for the soviet of people's deputies in question are present, and the quorum required for the soviet to adopt decisions is determined on the basis of the number of people's deputies attending the session.

Article 7. The operation of this law also extends to Moscow and St. Petersburg City Soviets and to autonomous oblast and autonomous okrug soviets of people's deputies.

Article 8. This law enters into force from the time it is published and will remain in force until the first sessions of the newly convened soviets of people's deputies are held.

[Signed] RSFSR President B. Yeltsin.

RSFSR House of the Soviets, Moscow, 5 December 1991.

Autonomous Okrug Administration Heads Appointed

PM2312161191 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA
in Russian 20 Dec 91 First Edition p 1

[Unattributed report: "Appointments"]

[Text] By decree of the RSFSR president, Gennadiy Pavlovich Nedelin has been appointed head of administration of the Taymyr (Dolgano-Nenets) Autonomous Okrug in Krasnoyarsk Kray; Aleksandr Vasilyevich Filipenko has been appointed head of administration of the Khanti-Mansiysk Autonomous Okrug in Tyumen Oblast; and Anatoliy Mikhaylovich Yakimov has been appointed head of administration of the Evenki Autonomous Okrug in Krasnoyarsk Kray.

Chechen Prepared To Enter Commonwealth

LD2112034191 Moscow TASS in English 2355 GMT
20 Dec 91

[Text] Groznyy December 20 TASS—The parliament and the president of the Chechen Republic, Dzhokhar Dudayev, issued today an appeal, expressing readiness to "enter on equal terms any regional commonwealth of states or any other commonwealth embracing all the former USSR". The appeal was addressed to heads of state and parliaments of all the Republics of the former Union.

The system of residence registration, formerly compulsory for citizens of the Republic, has been abolished in the Chechen Republic and passports are no longer needed there. The Interior Ministry of the Republic has been authorized to develop before February 1, 1992 a new form of a foreign passport for citizens of the Republic, which is expected to be valid both on the territory of the former USSR and outside it.

"In order to protect the honour and dignity of women of the Chechen Republic", males are now prohibited by law to work as gynecologists. Abortions are expected to be eventually banned in the Republic.

The Chechen parliament has declared Friday, the "holy day for Moslems", a day-off. Sundays will henceforth be working days in the Republic.

Dudayev Rejects Proposal To Exchange Experts

LD2312192191 Moscow TASS in English 1637 GMT
23 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Sharip Asuyev]

[Text] Groznyy December 23 TASS—Chechen President Dzhokhar Dudayev has rejected the Russian Parliament's proposal to send a group of experts to Moscow to prepare talks between Russia and the Chechen Republic.

Movladi Udugov, acting minister of information of the Chechen Republic, said the decision was prompted by the fact that Russia proposed to hold talks with the

Chechen-Ingush Republic, which no longer exists, rather than with the independent Chechen Republic.

The move has yet to be approved by the Chechen Parliament.

The republic, which was part of the Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Republic in northern Caucasus, proclaimed independence last month and elected Dudayev its first president.

Yaragi Mamodayev, head of the Chechen Economic Management Committee, said the republic will lift the blockade it declared last week to several Russian territories, including Krasnodar and Stavropol regions, leaving them without petrol.

Proposes Official Talks

*LD2312214991 Moscow POSTFACTUM in English
1901 GMT 23 Dec 91*

[Text] President Dzhakhar Dudayev agreed to hold official talks with a Russian Federation delegation, said Yuriy Yarov, deputy chairman of the republican Supreme Soviet. Yuriy Yarov deputy chairman of the republican Supreme Soviet told PF [POSTFACTUM] that on December 23 he had received a coded message from Dzhakhar Dudayev, president of the Chechen republic, in which the latter refused to exchange expert teams and proposed to commence official talks at once.

There are unofficial reports that Dzhakhar Dudayev proposes Kazbegi (Georgia) and Tartu (Estonia) as possible sites of the negotiations, whereas the Russian side would prefer to meet with Chechen representatives in Dagomys (Russian Federation). Aleksandr Belyaev, Petrosviet chairman, plans to apply in the nearest future to Yuriy Yarov and Dzhakhar Dudayev to propose that the talks be held in St. Petersburg.

Yuriy Yarov told PF that no less than a week will be required to coordinate the meeting of officials from Russia and Chechen republic.

Dudayev Sees Minsk Agreement as 'Inappropriate'

*PM2312150591 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA
in Russian 20 Dec 91 p 1*

[Telephone interview with Chechen Republic President Dzhokhar Dudayev in Grozny by correspondent Zh. Kasyanenko in Rostov-na-Donu; date not stated: "Dzhokhar Dudayev: 'We Are Proud People'"—first two paragraphs are introduction]

[Text] The interests of different peoples can ultimately be reduced to the simplest realities: peace and adequate prosperity at home, untrammelled dignity, and trust in one's neighbor. But how difficult, it turns out, is the road toward this. Although ideally everything should be based on the principle: If you want to be trusted yourself, consider the interests of all; then the interests of your people will be understood and respected.

It is possible to agree or disagree with Dzhokhar Dudayev's opinion on a very wide variety of questions. But he speaks in the name of his people.

[Kasyanenko] Dzhokhar Musayevich, how has the Minsk agreement of the three republics been received in Chechnya?

[Dudayev] I perceive this agreement as inappropriate for a whole number of reasons. First, the very idea of the primitive unification of republics along ethnic lines will set a bad example to others. The quick-fire nature of the alliance that has been concluded is surprising, and you cannot help but think: Had they not been preparing it behind the back of others, seeing that they reached agreement right away?

Second, I am surprised and alarmed at the role which has been allocated here to Armenia and Kazakhstan. What is it—as buffer republics? Is one to defend Russia from the East, the other from the South, each promoting Russia's interest in their regions? What position does the Minsk agreement put them in? After all, they will experience a double pressure—both from the direction of their "older brother," and from the direction of their nearest neighbors. Surely this is not the road to peace and concord?

And third, the main point. The member states of the so-called Commonwealth of Independent States [CIS] will claim rights of succession from the former USSR. But in what respects? In control over nuclear weapons, hard currency, and the whole economy. But all these things were created through the efforts of the whole people, including the republics which do not share the idea of the CIS. Why should they be done out of their share during this process? I believe that these are entirely fair questions, which must be asked of the Slavs by the other republics. They should not be decided behind some people's back, but openly, with full mutual understanding.

[Kasyanenko] You are a military man, Dzhokhar Musayevich. How do you assess the role of the Army in the settlement of the conflicts of every kind which arise in our country constantly?

[Dudayev] In civilized countries these conflicts should be settled only by political means. The Army should not be used to put pressure on anyone. I am unequivocally in favor of the withdrawal of troops from the Transcaucasus, but I am categorically against troops being concentrated on the other side of the Caucasus mountain range. And this is precisely the situation today. Surely no one is hoping that we can be intimidated with force, that we can be taken by hook or by crook, so to speak? The introduction of the state of emergency did not come off, so now they are assembling troops transferred to Russian jurisdiction. I believe that the soldiers too should not be exposed in this way.

[Kasyanenko] Well, and what is the state of affairs in the republic's economy today?

[Dudayev] Let me put it this way: no better, and in many respects worse than in other republics. The old obstacles have to be swept away. For example. This year, by agreement, the republic could reserve for its own needs 10 percent of the petroleum products produced here. The former leadership rushed hundreds of thousands of tonnes of petroleum products over the border at knock-down prices, and pocketed the proceeds itself. As a result, Chechnya has incurred losses to the order of \$1.5 billion.

And overall, the situation is, of course, an emergency one. We cannot even receive Chechens who live in other oblasts. Although the administrations of Yaroslavl, Tversk, and Tyumen Oblasts have adopted a decision to expel them from those territories. But I am against the label of "refugees" being stuck on Chechens. We are a proud people. We must hold out.

[Kasyanenko] However, you have offered asylum to Erich Honecker...

[Dudayev] Yes. It is not difficult for us to save and defend one unfortunate old man. The moral laws of all peoples, I think, dictate the same. After all, Honecker a victim, nothing more; anyone could find himself in his position. Behind him are years of struggle against fascism, of concentration camps. And now he is persecuted again. It is unfair.

[Kasyanenko] Thank you for the interview.

Chechen Citizens Given Right To Bear Arms

LD2212060391 Moscow All-Union Radio Mayak
Network in Russian 0800 GMT 21 Dec 91

[Text] The Chechen Republic's citizens now have the right to carry and purchase weapons freely. This is confirmed by a special decree issued by President Dudayev. The document says that the right to carry and possess weapons freely is an ancient Chechen tradition.

Ossetian Official Cited on Escalating Violence

LD2112213991 Moscow TASS International Service
in Russian 0939 GMT 21 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Valeriy Shanayev]

[Text] Vladikavkaz, 21 Dec (TASS)—"The appeal by the commission for the protection of human rights of the Georgian Supreme Soviet to the personnel of the military sub-units of the Ministries of Defense and of Internal Affairs of the former Union who are situated in the republic, calling on them to leave the locations where they are currently stationed and to return to their own republics and families or to recognize Georgia's jurisdiction, could cause a new, escalating wave of violence in the Caucasus," Akhsarbek Galazov, chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the North Ossetian Soviet Socialist Republic, said to the TASS correspondent.

"After all, it is the military—in contact with the national Ossetian Guard and with the self-defense detachments—which is the real stabilizing force in the greatest crisis zones of South Ossetia."

According to reports by the press center of the information committee of the South Ossetian Republic, last night again gave cause for fear on the far approaches to Tskhinvali and in Znaurskiy Rayon. Intensive shelling of housing areas and important national economic facilities was conducted from surrounding Georgian villages. Check points of the internal troops units and the territory of the helicopter regiment came under fire. No news of casualties has been received.

The Znauri rayon center exists in essence only on the geographical map. Permanent concentrated missile and artillery shelling have turned the settlement into ruins. Local residents have left it. Znauri is being defended against attack by guerrillas only by Ossetian self-defense detachments equipped with small arms.

Meanwhile the economic, transport, and foodstuffs blockade is tightening around Tskhinvali. All the surrounding roads are controlled by the Georgian side. The delivery of humanitarian cargoes from Vladikavkaz has virtually stopped. Electricity, gas, and water supplies to the town are severely disrupted. Homes are not being heated. At the same time, reliable sources confirm reports that new armed detachments of guerrillas are constantly arriving on the approaches to Tskhinvali. Armored vehicles, "Alazan" hail dispersal systems [gradoboyenyye sistemy], and artillery weapons are being moved up. Tskhinvali residents fear a new storm of the town.

The North Ossetian mass media today distributed the text of an appeal by the emergency congress of the Ossetian people to Boris Yeltsin, the RSFSR president, which states in particular: "The situation in our republic and in the Northern Caucasus as well, is strained to the utmost. On the one hand, Northern Ossetia has already exhausted all possibilities of accommodating the refugees from the various regions of Georgia, the number of which exceeds 100,000. The situation has been aggravated by the constant terror of the guerrillas and the lack of opportunities to restore the devastated industrial infrastructure and the housing stock of South Ossetia, which is making the return of the civilian population to their native hearths much more difficult. While expressing profound gratitude to the Russian government for their help to our brothers, we hope for more decisive actions by the Russian president directed toward elimination of the conflict and alleviating the lot of the refugees from South Ossetia and Georgia.

"Meanwhile, extremist representatives of the Ingush people have sharply aggravated the problem of the seized lands. They are encouraging people with irresponsible appeals to undertake illegal actions. The situation on the border between North Ossetia and Checheno-Ingushetia could at any moment slip out of control and bring the

peoples of the two union republics to bloody confrontations. At this anxious time for the peoples of the region we propose that a moratorium be announced on all territorial boundaries."

New Yakutsk President To Takes Office 27 Dec

OW2412003691 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1630 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Mikhail Nikolayev who was elected President of the Yakut-Sakha Republic on Friday [20 December] will take office on December 27 at a special parliamentary session.

Federation Affairs

Barannikov on New Security, Internal Ministry

OW2312201291 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1809 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The minister of security and internal affairs Viktor Barannikov has assured his staff that all who have the necessary experience and qualification will retain their jobs. In his address to the personnel the cl. [colonel]-general reminded them that the need to reform the security and internal affairs agencies stems from a rise in crime caused by a crisis of the entire system. To strengthen law and order is an indispensable condition for overcoming the crisis, he pointed out.

Barannikov explained that President Yeltsin's decree of December 19 on merging the central and Russian security and internal affairs structures was necessitated by the need to strengthen their potential.

The service responsible for state security in Russia will pose a separate branch, Barannikov said.

Appeals to Security Personnel

LD2312150891 Moscow TASS in English
1351 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Text] Moscow, 23 Dec (TASS)—Viktor Barannikov, RSFSR Minister of Security and Internal Affairs, has appealed to the personnel of the Russian's security and internal affairs bodies and to internal troops servicemen. The document, which TASS received today, stresses that the formation of the RSFSR Ministry of Security and Internal Affairs is dictated by the necessity of strengthening the potential of these law and order bodies. They have growing joint capabilities are increasing for protecting the rights and interests of citizens, the sovereignty and security of the Russian Federation, and for fighting organized crime, the drugs business, corruption, and other serious crimes.

Viktor Barannikov also assures them that the republic's leadership is undertaking additional measures to increase the social protection of workers in the law and order bodies. The Minister expresses the conviction that the personnel of Russia's security and internal affairs bodies will show maximum responsibility and organization and will fulfill its official duties reliably and precisely.

Security, Internal Affairs Merger Scheduled

OW2412015991 Moscow INTERFAX in English
2046 GMT 24 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] On Tuesday, December 24, parliamentary hearings on the merger of the state-security and internal-affairs bodies of the Union and the Russian Federation will begin in the Russian Federation's House of the Soviets' Smaller Hall, at 10:00 [local]. The hearings will also be attended by the Russian Supreme Soviet's committees for legislation, law-enforcement, defence and human rights.

Chairman of a sub-committee of the Parliamentary Committee for Defence and Security, Nikolay Kuznetsov, told IF [INTERFAX] that on December 26, the final document of the hearings will be submitted for discussion to the Supreme Soviet of the Russian federation.

The draft final document urges the Russian President to suspend the part of the decree dealing with the merger of the internal affairs bodies with the bodies of state security, said Mr Kuznetsov.

He also said that the preliminary analysis of this problem revealed that First Vice-Chairman of the Russian Government, Gennadiy Burbulis, and Vice-Premier Sergey Shakhrai did not consider the merger of these bodies expedient. The decision on the merger had been taken on the insistence of the former Minister of Internal Affairs of the USSR, Viktor Barannikov, who currently heads the Ministry of Security and Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation.

Extent of 2 Jan Price Increases Revealed

LD2312235191 Moscow TASS in English
2257 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Text] Moscow December 24 TASS—Free (market) prices on all the production and technical items, consumer goods, works and services will be introduced on January 2, 1992, under the Russian Government's resolution circulated late on Monday [23 December] evening. The prices will be formed in accordance with supply and demand.

The resolution cites top limits on state prices and tariffs on products and technical items and services: Prices on coal, oil and gas will go up by five times, gasoline—three times, diesel fuel—2.8 times.

The price for electricity supplied to the population will raise up to 12 kopecks per kilowatt (now it is four kopecks), the price for central heating and hot water will increase threefold. The rent will remain unchanged.

Prices on some types of bread, milk, yogurt and vegetable oil will increase threefold, sugar—3.5 times, vodka—4.5 times, medicines and medical goods—4 times.

Railway transportation will cost twice as much, air transportation—3 times, and riverine transportation—two times.

Governments of republics, which are part of the Russian Federation, executive authorities of territories, regions, autonomous formations, the cities of Moscow and St. Petersburg are given the right to lower the prices and tariffs on basic foodstuffs and services if necessary at the expense of local budgets.

Official Warns of 'Horrible Monetary Crisis'

OW2412001091 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1630 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] "Be prepared for a horrible monetary crisis in late December", deputy chairman of the budgetary commission of the council of republic of Russia's parliament Aleksandr Pochinok told delegates to the founding congress of the Public Committee for reforms in Russia held on Saturday [21 December] and Sunday. On Tuesday, he said, Russian authorities are starting to print 500-rouble banknotes which will be delivered by plane to all parts of the country on Friday. The printing of 1000-rouble banknotes will begin in late March.

The minting of new metal coins: one, three, five and ten rouble worth will begin in early January, he said. The samples have already been prepared. They present the images of St. Basil's Cathedral, two-headed eagle and the like.

Pochinok conceded that the multiuse coupons to be introduced in the Ukraine and Belarus are actually tantamount to new monetary units. "We are trying to talk them into giving up these plans", he said. If we fail, the consequences will be unpredictable. We'll have to add our own marking on our banknotes and limit the circulation of the 500- and 1000-rouble banknotes.

In answer to the question of IF's [INTERFAX] correspondent about the consequences of price liberalization planned for January 2 A. Pochinok said: "Nothing disastrous will take place, but gradually the prices will increase 3 or 5-fold. Considering that the cost of the average consumer's basket in the country amounts to some 340, and in Moscow to over 500 roubles, it's easy to foresee the result. Taking into account the experience of such countries as Brazil or Mexico, by the end of next year prices might increase 20-fold, said A. Pochinok.

The only recommendation he can give to the leaders of plants and offices is to pay the wages once a week, he said.

Rutskoy Highlights 'Wrong Course' for Reform

LD2312131391 Moscow TASS in English
1234 GMT 23 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Gennadiy Petrov]

[Text] Lisbon December 23 TASS—"I said and will continue to say that there is no reform programme, because listing measures at a congress of people's deputies does not amount to having a programme. In other words, we are following the wrong course," Russia's Vice-President Aleksandr Rutskoy said in an interview with a Portuguese newspaper.

"I am against freeing prices and am opposed to the market relations policy which gave the go-ahead to 600 exchanges and more than 1200 commercial banks that engage in nothing else but speculation. I am all for a civilized market economy, only we are not a country that can switch over to a market within a week," Rutskoy said.

"More than 100 million people are now living below poverty line in Russia. If prices are released now, the entire population of Russia will drop below the poverty line. I am convinced that a number of steps should precede price liberalization, including open borders for imports of food and consumer goods and monetary and land reforms. In my opinion, prices should not be released before October 1992. [quotation marks as received]

Rutskoy said he was dissatisfied with the present Russian government as its members lacked practical work experience. Hence, there was little likelihood that the president's reform decrees would be translated into life. Rutskoy said Russia's economic situation could only be stabilized by tougher disciplinary measures, a system of state orders for the duration of the first stage in transition to market relations and the mandatory fulfillment of all contractual obligations between enterprises.

If the Russian leadership fails to stabilize the situation in the country within the next two or three months, a social explosion will become unavoidable, Rutskoy said. The situation is catastrophic at many enterprises, judging by what he himself saw during his recent trip to Novosibirsk and Altay region, Rutskoy said.

The Russian vice-president said he did not believe in the threat of another coup d'etat. But he pointed out that one could not play forever with armed people. 400,000 officers are now shelterless. As a result of political games, nearly 40 per cent of officers are demoralized. An untoward use has been made of troops in the protracted conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia. "I think troops should be promptly withdrawn from this region," Rutskoy said.

As for his relations with the Russian president, Rutskoy said he was grateful to fate for bringing him together with Boris Yeltsin. "But I said during the election campaign that I would never be the president's puppet. And I have not changed. Now I am virtually removed from the decision-making mechanism, but this does not mean I cannot speak my mind."

"I am for the new Commonwealth. But I viewed and continue to view as inadmissible the haste with which the Commonwealth treaty was signed. I am alarmed by the fact that the people who worked so ardently to destroy the Union—and succeeded in this—are now vocal in their calls for the disintegration of Russia," Rutskoy said.

Foreign Minister Kozyrev Assesses Future

PM2012225391 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA
in Russian 21 Dec 91 First Edition p 1

[Interview with Russian Foreign Minister A. Kozyrev by Lieutenant Colonel R. Mustafin; place and date not given: "'We Are Arriving at a New System of Values', Russia's Foreign Minister A. Kozyrev Declares in a Conversation with KRASNAYA ZVEZDA's Correspondent"]

[Text] [Mustafin] 1991 is approaching its end, and at the same time the Soviet Union is receding into history. The new year marks the beginning of a new era for the peoples inhabiting the former USSR, who are looking into the future with alarm. How do you perceive Russia's future?

[Kozyrev] First of all I would like to say that I do not share the panic mood which has been evident recently. There is no need to scare ourselves to death and give up. The new year will bring a sufficient charge of optimism.

[Mustafin] What is the basis for your optimism?

[Kozyrev] At long last understandable and, it seems to me, viable structures of state existence in the post-totalitarian age have started emerging. The main point, as Andrey Dmitriyevich Sakharov said in the past, is not to get buried beneath the ruins of the disintegrated empire.

[Mustafin] Does such a danger exist?

[Kozyrev] I think that now, following the signing of the agreement between the leaders of Russia, the Ukraine, and Belarus, that danger is receding. The process of transforming the former Union's republics into independent sovereign states has, on the whole, gone through democratic institutions. Furthermore, these states have still not put too great a distance between themselves. The creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States is a formula leading us all away from the Yugoslav option.

[Mustafin] Andrey Vladimirovich, in your view, what needs to be done to restore Russia's status as a great power?

[Kozyrev] The world competition for the status of a great power today is decided at different levels and in different terms than before. This primarily depends on scientific and technical progress and the position held in markets, in technology markets. It is there that the real battle has been and is still being fought. Unfortunately, the Soviet Union has lost this battle, and this is the reason for its collapse. The combination of democratic conditions alone is capable of producing a viable market economy which, in its turn, can guarantee technological progress. Therefore, if we release our democratic and economic market forces now, in about 10-12 years we will be able to join the ranks of leading countries.

[Mustafin] You will probably agree that the USSR, just like other states, has always had some common idea which has held foreign policy together. What is the essence of this common idea in Russia?

[Kozyrev] I would say that this is not an idea but a set of value guidelines. Now we are about to arrive at the same system of values which unites the West, in other words market economic values and the priority of the individual. It is therefore perfectly natural that what is happening is like a change of allies, a new community with other states is emerging. This is not treason. We ourselves have taken this path, the path of democratic transformations.

Thus, one of the foreign policy priorities is to get back in the ranks of our natural partners and allies. At the end of the last century and at the beginning of this century Russia held its proper place among states like France, Germany, and the United States. We need to get back to that circle.

Another priority is to subordinate our foreign policy actions not to some sort of global schemes, but to normal economic interests. Everything that promotes economic development and normal life for the Russians would be in line with our interests in foreign policy.

[Mustafin] For several decades the military factor has played a dominant role in Soviet foreign policy. How, in your view, will the "conversion" of Russia's foreign policy proceed?

[Kozyrev] The elaboration of the concept of Russia's national security is under way. It is being elaborated by experts. In practical terms, however, it is necessary to proceed from the fact that nobody in the West intends to attack us. But this does not mean that we have to disarm unilaterally and fully. It is necessary to respond to the situation in the world appropriately. We probably need to retain some sort of nuclear guarantee. More likely than not Russia will have to take this on—not singly, but as part of a community. We hope that this is what will happen in a few days' time in Alma-Ata. We will not forget that there are numerous sources of instability in

the "Third World." It would be wrong for us to try to influence the course of events everywhere. At the same time, there is no point in going for isolationism. We could participate in maintaining peace on the planet on equal terms with the other great powers.

[Mustafin] How, in this transitional period, are relations with the Union Ministry of Foreign Affairs, I mean the Ministry of External Relations, being built?

[Kozyrev] First, let me say a few word about the Army. Although it is a structure which is least likely to succumb to a division along national lines and Russia is in principle against dividing it, the incumbent leadership of the Armed Forces, in contrast with Yazov, has swiftly, sensibly, and responsibly approached this process. Despite all the difficulties, Yevgeniy Ivanovich Shaposhnikov is displaying an amazing ability to adapt to the new conditions.

Unfortunately, with all due respect, I cannot say the same about the leadership of the Union Ministry of External Relations. I have been knocking on that closed door for two months. My main worry is the country's interests. Whereas we have had to tackle a significantly larger volume of work which just 200 staffers have been forced to do, and this includes technical staff, some 3,000 skilled and trained professionals in the Union Ministry of External Relations have essentially proved incapable. Many of them are demoralized and are starting to run after jobs in joint enterprises. We are experiencing a drain of valuable cadres. We cannot allow the sell-off of these Ministry of Foreign Affairs cadres.

[Mustafin] And one last question. What would you like to tell our readers, the men in uniform?

[Kozyrev] I would very much like to see the military treated with as much respect as I treat them.

Democratic Forces Congress Backs Commonwealth

*PM2012135191 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA
in Russian 18 Dec 91 First Edition p 1*

[Unattributed report: "How To Build Relations Between Republics"]

[Text] The constituent conference of the Congress of Democratic Forces of RSFSR Republics and National and Territorial Formations took place in Moscow 14-15 December. Over 40 parties, organizations, and movements from 19 republics and six national and territorial formations participated in the conference.

The main debate, RSFSR People's Deputy Vladimir Lysenko noted, developed over the question of the Russian Federation's future. Most conference participants favored turning Russia from a virtual unitary state into a free, democratic, federative state. A section of delegates proposed switching to treaty relations between republics, advocating the creation of a confederative state. The joint declaration, signed by 37 organizations,

contains an appeal to all republics and national and territorial formations to conclude an agreement (a treaty) on the delimitation of powers between RSFSR members. This treaty could become an integral part of the new Russian Federation Constitution.

The congress supported the creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States, favored priority being given to human rights, and stressed its commitment to the principle of peoples' right to self-determination.

A Congress Consultative Council was formed at the conference. Its next session is scheduled for February next year in Kazan.

Parliamentarian Denies Rutskoy To Resign

*OW2312193391 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1809 GMT 23 Dec 91*

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Russian MP [member of parliament] Vladimir Lysenko has dismissed the allegations attributed to him that Russia's Vice-President Aleksandr Rutskoy will soon resign. "Notwithstanding my critical attitude to the vice-president's latest statements concerning the economic policy of Russia's leadership I believe that under the circumstances his resignation would entail very negative political consequences", V. Lysenko told IF's [INTERFAX] correspondent.

According to the official communique on a session held in Moscow by the coordinating committee of Russia's Republican party, addressing the session the party's cochairman Vladimir Lysenko said that Vice-President Aleksandr Rutskoy is likely to resign shortly. Signed by the party's press secretary K. Svitnev, the communique said that A. Rutskoy and N. Travkin might become the leaders of a national patriotic bloc.

"In view of the continuing genocide against the people of South Ossetia practised by the Georgian leadership", during the session the coordinating committee of Russia's Republican party urged the leadership of Russia and other independent states to refrain from establishing diplomatic relations "with the undemocratic regime of Zviad Gamsakhurdia" and impose comprehensive economic sanctions against it.

Yeltsin Amends Official Travel Ordinance

*PM2312113191 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA
in Russian 18 Dec 91 First Edition p 1*

[Unattributed report under "Official Section" rubric: "Ordinance"]

[Text] By an ordinance of the RSFSR president in connection with the reorganization of the RSFSR organs of state administration and for the purpose of regulating travel on official business trips, including trips abroad,

in partial amendment to the RSFSR president's ordinance No. 35 of 7 September 1991 it is prescribed that the RSFSR president makes decisions on the sending on official business of the leading staffers of the RSFSR state organs and the RSFSR president's administration indicated in the appendix.

G.E. Burbulis, first deputy chairman of the RSFSR Government, is to approve the list of duties for members of the RSFSR Government and other leading staffers of the RSFSR state organs for whom decisions on travel on official business trips are made by the first deputy chairman of the RSFSR Government.

Burbulis on Land Reform, Budget, Property

*LD2112124891 Moscow Radio Rossii Network
in Russian 1600 GMT 18 Dec 91*

[Text] The Russian Government met for a working session on 18 December. First Deputy Chairman Gennadiy Burbulis briefed journalists on the main topics and problems dealt with today. The main thing that worries the government is the 1992 budget, division of state property, the future of the collective farms in the coming year, and introduction of the new Russian national emblem. Correspondent Vyacheslav Osipov reports:

[Begin recording] [Osipov] Although Gennadiy Burbulis has devoted his attention mostly to the 1992 budget and the division of state property, I would like to draw your attention to the decree that is now being prepared and which, according to government members, should considerably facilitate implementation of the land reform in Russia. This is how Gennadiy Burbulis defined the essence of this document:

[Burbulis] We envisage a sufficiently firm program but, at the same time, consider all the necessary protective measures—that is, discontinuing financing to all the loss-making enterprises and offering maximum legal and organizational assistance in their reorganization into various forms of enterprise, depending, first of all, on their actual conditions and requirements.

[Osipov] We will see from next year's harvest whether these measures result in more food, but at the moment, the commission for food, headed by Burbulis himself, has been formed within the government framework. This is not the first commission which is making efforts if not to feed the Russian population at least to relieve pressure or save the food distribution system from collapse. Work on next year's budget has also been connected with softening of the crisis. However, this will be adjusted almost every month. The government intends to submit the concept of a deficit-free budget to the RSFSR Supreme Soviet. Burbulis says it will be based on such key principles as substantial reduction of the defense subsidies; implementation of a new tax policy; and use of the nontraditional measures, particularly efficient sale of the unfinished construction sites on a competitive basis. Burbulis described the question of dividing state property as very important. With this objective, a special

government decision has been prepared in which the strategic course is outlined with the aim to relieve maximally the state from owning, using, and administering a whole number of institutions and establishments which until now were state property. With this, according to Burbulis, a real independence will be extended to all the enterprise structures. Designs for the new Russian state emblem were also examined at the government's sitting. Nearly 20 people were working on it. What has emerged is a two-headed eagle but without the symbols of the old Russian empire—the sceptre and crown. In one version, the eagles are happy; in another, they look menacing. Government members have chosen the happy version.

Gennadiy Burbulis answered questions about the forthcoming meeting of the heads of states who intend to create a new commonwealth, which will take place on 21 December in Alma-Ata. It is expected that the organizational structure of the future Commonwealth will be examined there, particularly creation of the council of heads of state and the council of the heads of government and, on their basis, the defense council. To the question of who will keep the nuclear button in this structure, Gennadiy Burbulis has noted that the answer will be given only after the meeting in Alma-Ata. Will Mikhail Gorbachev be there? The Russian Government member said that this depends on Gorbachev himself. Nobody is against his presence, but nobody wants to issue an official invitation. [end recording]

Deputies Accuse Bakatin of 'High Treason'

*LD2312232791 Moscow TASS International Service
in Russian 1647 GMT 23 Dec 91*

[By KRIMPRESS-TASS correspondent Sergey Oleynik]

[Text] Moscow, 23 Dec (TASS)—A group of RSFSR Supreme Soviet and Moscow City Soviet deputies demanded today that criminal proceedings be instituted against Vadim Bakatin, former chairman of the Interpublic Security Service (ISS). A. Tsopov, chairman of the Moscow City Soviet subcommission for combating crime, said at a news conference today that the diagram of bugging devices in the American Embassy building in Moscow handed over by Bakatin is included in the "list of major data that constitute state secrets" currently in force. Therefore, the actions by the head of the ISS, which has been disbanded, can be qualified in accordance with Article 64 of the RSFSR Criminal Code as "high treason in the form of betraying data that constitute state secrets." A relevant statement has been sent to USSR Procurator General Valentin Stepankov.

V. Kuzin, chairman of the Russian Supreme Soviet subcommission for human rights, took a directly opposite stand. In his view, the installation of bugging devices on the territory of a sovereign state (such as the U.S. Embassy building) was a violation of international law. By his actions, Bakatin restored the laws breached by the KGB, Kuzin said.

While differing in their views of the ISS chairman's actions, those holding the news conference unanimously condemned Boris Yeltsin's decree on merging state security and militia bodies. The people's deputies expressed concern that implementing the presidential decree would lead to monopolizing law enforcement activity and, as a result, to infringing upon civil rights and democratic freedoms "along the lines of 1937."

Supreme Soviet

Resolution on Ratification of Commonwealth

CM2312192691 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA
in Russian 17 Dec 91 First Edition p 1

["RSFSR Supreme Soviet Resolution on the Ratification of the Agreement on the Creation of a Commonwealth of Independent States"]

[Text] The Russian Federation Supreme Soviet on December 12 passed a resolution to ratify the agreement on the establishment of a Commonwealth of Independent States:

The Supreme Soviet of the Russian Soviet Federative [as received] Socialist Republic [RSFSR], guided by Point 15 of Article 109 of the Constitution (fundamental law) of the RSFSR, resolves:

1. To ratify the agreement between the Republic of the Russian Federation (RSFSR) and Ukraine on the establishment of the Commonwealth of Independent States, signed in Minsk on December 8, 1991.
2. With a view to creating conditions necessary to implement Article 11 of the agreement concerned, to lay down that pending the adoption of the appropriate legislative acts of the RSFSR the norms of the former USSR shall apply on the territory of the RSFSR insofar as they do not contradict the Constitution of the RSFSR, the legislation of the RSFSR, and the agreement.

3. For the Presidium of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet, in cooperation with the RSFSR president and the RSFSR Government, to ensure that drafts of normative acts stemming from the provisions of the agreement to establish the Commonwealth of Independent States should be submitted to the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR.

The Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR addresses all states that are former union republics of the USSR, regardless of their ethnic, religious, and other differences, and share the idea behind the Agreement, with a proposal to join the agreement on the formation of the Commonwealth of Independent States for mutually advantageous cooperation in the interests of all nations.

[Signed] RSFSR Supreme Soviet Chairman R.I. Khasbulatov.

RSFSR House of Soviets, Moscow, 12 December 1991, No. 2014-1.

Liquidation Commission Grants Deputies Status

OW2412015491 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1720 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] On Monday [23 December], the Commissions for the Elimination of the Union Parliament approved, with reservations, the draft resolution on extending the status of people's deputies of the Russian Federation to the people's deputies of the USSR representing Russia. These deputies cannot be elected to the leading bodies of the congress, the Supreme Soviet and the committees and commissions, but can take part in their work without the right to vote. The draft resolution will be endorsed by the Russian federation's Supreme Soviet.

The commission also recommended that the Supreme Soviet of the Russian federation adopt a resolution on allocating 70 million roubles to the former Supreme Soviet for the first quarter of 1992, for the period of its elimination. The former union republics will be asked to compensate part of this sum. The other part will be compensated by using these bodies for commercial purposes.

Chairman of the Elimination Commission, Mr. Nikolay Ryabov, told IF [INTERFAX] that its members were guided by the desire to soften the elimination process as much as possible and to avoid confrontation in society.

Property Missing From Union Parliament

OW2412015791 Moscow INTERFAX in English
2046 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The stock-taking of the former Union parliament's property is not over yet, Mr Ivan Boyko, chief of the department for the security of the Russian Federation's supreme bodies said at a press conference on Monday [23 December]. He said, however, that some of the telephones, fax machines and other property were missing. Mr Boyko said that on December 17, while leaving the room of the former USSR Committee for Constitutional Compliance, which had been passed over to the Russian Federation's Constitutional Court, a certain Voropayev was caught trying to take 137,000 rubles out in his briefcase. This fact is being investigated.

Deputy Prime Minister Details Food Situation

LD2412011791 Moscow POSTFACTUM in English
2226 GMT 23 Dec 91

[From the "Domestic Market" section]

[Text] Domestic market December foodstuffs supply in Moscow was 30-40 per cent of last year's level, says Russian Deputy Prime Minister Yegor Gaydar speaking at the December 23 session of the Presidium of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet, Gaydar also stated that

Moscow residents will have to survive the most difficult period up to January 20, 1992. Starting from this day, said Gaydar, large-scale deliveries within the foreign loans will arrive from abroad. In the first week of January the first cargo of European humanitarian aid will be delivered. The Russian Government plans to sell these commodities through the network of retail stores. Before January 20 the government suggests involving 40 thousand tons of meat from the state reserves. According to the record prepared by staff of the Presidium of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet, at present the remainder of meat in Moscow totals 26,500 tons (enough for 10 days of consuming), creamy butter—4,500 tons, cheese—600 tons, canned milk products—15,500 tons. The record notes that in specific types of foodstuffs the remainder will be enough to provide 5-7 days requirement of the residents. As for the beginning of 1992 the remainder of flour will total 31,000 tons (11 days of consuming), cereals—26,000 tons (44 days). According to the resolution of the RSFSR Government of December 12, 1991, delivery of imported 80,000 tons of meat and 13,900 tons of vegetable oil was expected in Moscow. In fact the delivered quantity will probably total 30,000 tons of meat and 2,900 tons of oil. The supply of imported foodstuffs was disturbed by RSFSR Government's failure to provide payment guarantees to Vnesheconombank [Bank for Foreign Economic Activity], as well as by inaccurate shipments of exported oil products and other raw materials by Russian manufacturers. According to Moscow Deputy Mayor Yuriy Luzhkov, the situation with sugar is also difficult in Moscow. Luzhkov believes that to secure adequate food supply in Moscow and St. Petersburg the RSFSR budget has to provide for these purposes export resources and hard currency funds totaling, correspondingly, 8 billion and 4 billion US dollars annually. To save January 600 million rubles are to be found immediately, said Luzhkov.

Presidium of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet passed a resolution obliging the RSFSR and Moscow City governments to take all the necessary measures to deliver foodstuffs to Moscow. The Russian Government was offered to consider the issue of forming a working committee dealing with the supply of foodstuffs in Moscow, St. Petersburg and other major industrial centers of Russia.

International Affairs

Rutskoy Ends Tour of Near Eastern Countries

Leaves Kabul; Flag Raised

*LD2312171891 Moscow TASS in English
1610 GMT 23 Dec 91*

[By TASS correspondent German Baykov]

[Text] Kabul December 23 TASS—Russian Vice-President Aleksandr Rutskoy left Kabul for Moscow today, winding up his tour of Near Eastern countries including Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan.

In Afghanistan Rutskoy discussed with President Najibullah cooperation and Afghan peaceful settlement, as well as a possibility of releasing Soviet prisoners of war, held by mujahidin. He also had a meeting with Afghan Prime Minister Fazl Haq Khaleqyar.

The vice-president took part in a ceremony of hoisting the Russian national flag over the embassy of the former Soviet Union.

New Conference on Results

*LD2412001291 Moscow TASS International Service
in Russian 1840 GMT 23 Dec 91*

[By TASS correspondents German Baykov, Igor Ivantsov, and Vasily Titov]

[Text] Kabul, 23 Dec (TASS)—One of the most important tasks of the visit to Iran, Pakistan, and Afghanistan was the discussion of matters concerning the establishment of new treaty relations between Russia and these countries, RSFSR Vice President A.V. Rutskoy stated, speaking at a news conference in Afghanistan.

As a result of meetings with the leadership of Iran, the head of the Russian delegation said understanding has been reached on the elaboration and conclusion of direct bilateral agreements. Particular attention was devoted to trade and economic relations, the scope of which it is proposed to increase two or threefold. Russia supported Iran's initiative in creating a most favored status trade zone in the Caspian Sea area. Iran, the vice president noted, is willing to participate in the new phase of the Afghan political settlement in keeping with the plan of the UN secretary general, and expressed support for the peaceful resolution of this problem and the preservation of the territorial integrity of Afghanistan. At meetings with representatives of the Afghan opposition based on the territory of Iran, A.V. Rutskoy noted that understanding was reached on the speedy release of prisoners of war and imprisoned mujahedin.

Touching on the talks in Pakistan, the head of the Russian delegation noted the mutual agreement of the parties with regard to the elaboration and signing in the near future of a bilateral treaty on all-round cooperation. The RSFSR supports Islamabad's initiative on holding a meeting of representatives from Russia, the United States, Pakistan, China, and India on the subject of the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons in Southwest Asia. The leaders of Pakistan spoke in support of active efforts for an Afghan settlement and expressed willingness to act jointly with Russia and Iran in this direction, stimulating a pan-Afghan dialogue.

Dwelling on the talks in Pakistan with the leaders of the Afghan opposition, the vice president stated that the majority of them approve the statement of the UN secretary general on a peace settlement in Afghanistan and the resolution of the problem by political means. Also discussed was progress in fulfilling understandings on the results of the visit by a delegation of the Afghan

opposition to Moscow. An understanding was reached that the step-by-step return of prisoners of war would start by 25 December. A. V. Rutskey recalled that Russia had completely fulfilled the obligations it had taken upon itself under the agreements concluded in Moscow.

The RSFSR vice president announced that he intends to meet the leadership of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan to discuss the results of this trip and the possible participation by these states in the settlement of the Afghan question. It is proposed to create a commission which will include representatives of the Republic of Afghanistan, the Afghan opposition, Iran, Pakistan, Russia, and the six countries mentioned above, and to appeal to the UN secretary general and the Security Council to grant it the status of a UN commission. Its first demand should be a cease-fire, and then the fulfillment of the proposals of the UN secretary general.

Summarizing the results of meetings with the leadership of the Republic of Afghanistan, the Russian vice president described them as useful and fruitful, and helpful toward a just resolution of the Afghan problem.

Afghan Discussions Detailed

LD2312235691 Moscow TASS International Service
in Russian 1702 GMT 23 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondents German Baykov, Igor Ivantsov, and Vasilii Titov]

[Text] Kabul, 23 Dec (TASS)— The short working visit to the Republic of Afghanistan by A. V. Rutskey, vice president of the RSFSR, has ended. During the visit he held two rounds of talks with Najibollah, president of Afghanistan, and met Prime Minister F. H. Khaleqyar.

During the meetings, which took place in an atmosphere of friendship and mutual understanding, the parties held an all-around discussion of the situation in Afghanistan, the RSFSR, and the Commonwealth of Independent States, and of the situation in the region and in the world. They examined issues connected with the process of political reconciliation in Afghanistan, the participation of Russia in the settlement of external aspects of this issue, and also the development and strengthening of mutually advantageous cooperation between the two republics. It was noted at the talks that the course of the Government of the Republic of Afghanistan toward national reconciliation, which is receiving increasing support, is creating favorable conditions for a peaceful resolution of the Afghan problem.

The Russian vice president expressed support for a settlement in Afghanistan based upon intra-Afghan dialogue and consensus. He praised the statement of the UN secretary general on Afghanistan and emphasized willingness to do everything that is necessary for its implementation. A. V. Rutskey expressed satisfaction with the sincere efforts of the Republic of Afghanistan for the release of Soviet prisoners of war, as a result of which 10

men have been returned. Afghanistan will unilaterally release prisoners belonging to opposition groups as an act of goodwill and in order to promote a solution of this problem.

The Republic of Afghanistan welcomed the collective stance of the RSFSR, Iran, and Pakistan and their commitment to a political settlement in Afghanistan as quickly as possible and expressed support for joint efforts for a cease-fire as an important step toward ensuring peace and stability in the Republic of Afghanistan.

The parties agreed to set up joint Afghan-Russian commissions in the economic, trade, scientific and technical, and cultural fields and to set about the exchange of delegations. The RSFSR expressed willingness, despite the economic difficulties resulting from the country's transition to a free market system, to provide all-around economic, scientific, and technical assistance to the Republic of Afghanistan during 1992.

Afghan President Cited

LD2312210191 Moscow Central Television Vostok
Program and Orbita Networks in Russian 1630 GMT
23 Dec 91

[Report by correspondent A. Shkirando; from the "TV Inform" newscast]

[Text] [Announcer] The working visit of Russian Vice President Aleksandr Rutskey to Afghanistan ended on 23 December.

[Shkirando] The main purpose of his visit was to establish new political, diplomatic, trade and economic, and cultural ties between Russia and Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. During his meetings and conversations with the leaders of these countries, Aleksandr Rutskey said at a news conference, a lot of attention was focused on solving the Afghan problem and releasing Soviet POW's. Despite the promise by opposition leaders to release the first group of Soviet POW's before 25 December, not one of our compatriots has been released, although Mojadedi, president of the interim Afghan Government, believes that a goodwill gesture has been made on his country's part. He handed over to Aleksandr Rutskey one Habibula who, according to him, and as indicated in his official documents, is a native of Turkmenistan. However, it transpired that Habibula, known as Bababul, is not a Soviet but an Afghan Turkmen, and the whole story of his captivity, which had been developed in Pakistan, burst like a soap bubble.

In the opinion of Afghan President Najibollah, representatives of the Afghan opposition were quick to make commitments connected with the swift return of Soviet POW's to their homeland. The point is the majority of them are not in the hands of the Peshawar opposition but at the disposal of the field commanders that are operating on Afghan territory.

As far as the Government of the Republic of Afghanistan is concerned, it will make every effort to assist the speedy return of Soviet POW's without any conditions or provisos, the president of Afghanistan said.

Kozyrev, Baker Discuss Nuclear Control, Aid

*LD2412102891 Moscow Radio Rossii Network
in Russian 1000 GMT 24 Dec 91*

[Text] Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev held a wide-ranging telephone conversation with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker on December 23. According to the latter, the United States and the West are on the whole satisfied with the agreement between the members of the Commonwealth of Independent States on unified control over nuclear weapons. During the conversation, special attention was paid to humanitarian aid to Russia and other Commonwealth members.

Security Increases as U.S. Aid Arrives

*LD2312194391 Moscow All-Union Radio Mayak
Network in Russian 1700 GMT 23 Dec 91*

[Text] Humanitarian aid from the United States has begun arriving in Moscow and St. Petersburg. According to the Russian Information Agency, two U.S. military transport aircraft have landed at Moscow's Sheremetyevo-1 Airport. They brought 60 tonnes of food for old people's homes, underprivileged children's schools, and polyclinics in Moscow and the Moscow Oblast.

As of today, patrols have been stepped up at railway stations in St. Petersburg. The aim is to guard the food deliveries continuously coming to the city. It is planned to strengthen security at seaports as well.

Belarus

Chairman Shushkevich Views Current Issues

LD2212171191 Moscow Central Television First
Program Network in Russian 1310 GMT 22 Dec 91

[Studio phone-in program linking Moscow and Minsk, featuring Belarus Supreme Soviet Chairman Stanislav Stanislavovich Shushkevich and journalist Aleksandr Kloskovskiy in Minsk; Yuriy Vorobyevskiy, All-Union Television Company observer; and Vladimir Velman, Estonian radio commentator, in Moscow; Velman acts as anchorman—live]

[Excerpts] [Velman] Good evening, dear viewers. Today, we have a live link-up between the two capitals, Moscow and Minsk, and Stanislav Shushkevich, chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Republic of Belarus, is taking part in the dialogue. Our conversation with him is of special interest because less than 24 hours ago, documents were signed that ended a whole era in the history of state formations in an enormous part of the globe and started a new one. [passage omitted introducing participants; brief biography of Shushkevich]

[Shushkevich] [passage omitted] I should like to speak today, not about myself, but about the Republic of Belarus. [passage omitted]

I think that the conditions are right now for us not to lose our common sense and—as an independent state, the Republic of Belarus—to create a really worthy state. This presumes the closest interaction and closest commonwealth with the former subjects of the former Soviet Union and probably with other states that did not consider themselves as such although considered such subjects de jure. I think that is enough for an introduction.

[Velman] Thank you, Stanislav Stanislavovich. I should like to ask you a question that, at this moment, must be on everybody's minds. Less than 24 hours ago, an event took place in Alma-Ata of such extraordinary importance that it is bound to take us a long time to sort it out. How do you assess the prospects of the Commonwealth that formed itself yesterday in Alma-Ata?

[Shushkevich] I think it was an extraordinary event that took place in Alma-Ata. I am wary of the words like historic, significant, etc. It was an out-of-the-ordinary event, although there is a temptation to use other words here, much more weighty ones. What happened in Alma-Ata? In the past, everybody was being dragged into a commonwealth. Dragged into a union. While to Alma-Ata, everybody arrived of their own accord and decided: We are joining the Minsk agreement, not as associate members, but as equals. This is recorded in the documents adopted there. [passage omitted]

We must eliminate any open questions in the world, and we do not want the world to be afraid of us. I am saying this directly—we are handing over the nuclear button to the President of Russia Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin;

however, nuclear weapons can be only used on the basis of consent from all the nuclear republics. I think, of course, that we will never get as far as that, and we are not going to move in that direction, but the issue has been juridically finalized, and from the formal point of view, the situation is such that the world need not worry about it. As to Belarus, we are moving toward a nuclear-free status, and other subjects of the Commonwealth of the Independent States respect this.

[Kloskovskiy] By the way, Stanislav Stanislavovich, you have mentioned the forthcoming meeting in Minsk—a number of our viewers want you to specify its agenda—what exactly are the leaders of the Commonwealth going to talk there about? And another question following from this: What is Minsk going to gain from its status as the coordinating center of the Commonwealth? Some people, actually, make joking references to Ilf and Petrov, concerning "New-Moscow" and "Old Vasyuki" [reference to a 1920's satirical novel "The Twelve Chairs" by Ilf and Petrov, featuring a provincial town of Vasyuki, which claims the status of a new capital].

[Shushkevich] Well, let us take it in order: There are two issues on the agenda, the military issue and the issue of the institutions of the Commonwealth. These are serious documents, and they must be seriously prepared, and the preparations have already started.

In fact, some of these documents were already ready for yesterday's meeting. We adopted the Alma-Ata declaration in which we set out our approach to these questions. Other documents need further work and they will be presented when they are ready. These are documents on military questions and Commonwealth institutions. [passage omitted]

There is a whole range of other questions. Incidentally, a number of bilateral treaties were signed in Alma-Ata yesterday on economic cooperation between individual members of the Commonwealth. We are setting up substantial direct links. We have decided how to approach the solution, the coordinated solution, of many economic questions.

[Kloskovskiy] Are you not afraid that Minsk might turn into "New-Moscow"?

[Shushkevich] I am convinced that Minsk has no intention of becoming a "New Vasyuki," so to speak, and I think that those who come to Minsk will agree with me. Minsk will ensure that all those bodies that instruct it to establish the Commonwealth will be able to work in proper surroundings. I think that all these bodies will be accommodated in a single building on one of our squares. [passage omitted]

We have gained the right to be called people. We have won the right to decide for ourselves on various questions, including very complex interethnic questions. We have gained the right to decide them without interference by the venerable Soviet establishment, without those who always knew the answers to each and every

question on the basis of general Marxist-Leninist doctrine. We have won the right to decide these questions on the basis of common sense and historical realities. I think we will succeed in resolving them. If we need to seek advice on this, we will do so. For instance, we consulted Lithuania on the future of Belarussians in Lithuania and Lithuanians in Belarus. We adopted a declaration, we agreed on how we would resolve these questions, and we are settling them in a dignified manner.

We have no territorial claims. Incidentally, this is one of the main principles of the Alma-Ata declaration. We have no territorial claims. In general, we are happy with the territory, Belarussian territory, we have at the moment, even though, as I have said many times, the Belarussian nation has spread its roots significantly further afield. But we can revive our national traditions. We can revive our national culture. We have the greatest respect for those who protect the interests of national minorities, including those places where Belarussians are in a minority. I think we will find a way of settling this question. Their specific interests are obviously expressed in different ways in different republics. The degree of neglect varies from republic to republic, as far as these questions are concerned.

In our country, incidentally, the process of assimilation has developed extremely widely because the Belarussian language is similar to the Russian language and Belorussian culture in places has simply been trampled on. I believe it will be reborn.

[Vorobyevskiy] Stanislav Stanislavovich, another question in this connection: How do you see the geopolitical place of the Republic of Belarus within the European framework?

[Shushkevich] The Republic of Belarus is situated in the center of Europe, but this, incidentally, is a great revelation to many people. I do not claim any exclusive role for the Republic of Belarus, but I think that what has been stated in our declaration, to wit the setting up of a non-nuclear republic and the setting up of a neutral state—that is to say, we are striving toward this, we will reach that point, for this is a lengthy process and it has to be conducted consistently without getting exasperated—well, I think that this is for the benefit of all those who populate Europe.

I repeat: We will carry out these steps consistently, patiently, explaining things and convincing the people of Belarus—and incidentally the parliament too very often has to be convinced of this—of the fact that this is the logical path, that it is in the interests both of Belarus and Russia and Poland and everything that surrounds us. I believe that at the general political level, the non-nuclear status of this zone will be to the benefit of the whole of mankind.

[Velman] Stanislav Stanislavovich, we are receiving many questions by telephone, and we will shortly give the floor to our colleague who is sitting with you in the

studio, but in the meantime let me put to you some questions from Moscow. A question from Izhevsk: Why is the nuclear button being given to Boris Yeltsin in particular? Why is Russia the one that ends up having a seat in the UN Security Council? A question straight to the point.

[Shushkevich] I am a little surprised, you know, that such a question should arise in Izhevsk, for the Soviet Union has often been identified with the Russians. Furthermore, Russia's economic potential—let's put it this way, if we name the greatest scientists in the development of nuclear weapons, I have to admit that they are predominantly Russian citizens, and I could repeat that again, and so on and so forth.

It seems to me that Russia has a legitimate right to this. Here the most important solution of the question is that there should be no spreading around of that right: It must not be spread around, one cannot give many the opportunity to have access to nuclear weapons. The fact that this is one button; therefore, I consider that that is a very serious decision, as well as the fact that everyone states that there will be no rush to get hands on that button—that is good. This is Russia's legal right, and furthermore this is the united opinion of all participants in the Alma-Ata meeting, that Russia must take the seat in the UN Security Council. I state this on behalf of Belarus and on behalf of the Republic of Belarus as a member of the United Nations. Otherwise it seems to me that additional complications might arise in the world. Russia has a legitimate right to that seat.

[Velman] Stanislav Stanislavovich, another question, from Voskresensk. Irina Krivosheyeva asks: A few days ago it was mentioned in a speech by Shushkevich that states where conflicts on interethnic grounds are taking place must not be admitted into the Commonwealth of Independent States. But yesterday, after the Alma-Ata meeting, it became known that the documents of the Commonwealth had been signed by Azerbaijan. What have you to say about this?

[Shushkevich] I can tell you that this was one of the most complex issues discussed yesterday, and one of the questions that was discussed with the very highest degree of care. All the consequences of a positive resolution of this matter had to be weighed both for the Republic of Azerbaijan and, I want to say, not just for the Republic of Azerbaijan, for certain other states, too. Everyone—I stress this, everyone—came to the unanimous conclusion that this question had to be resolved in such a way as to extinguish these conflicts. To extinguish them.

I would not say that I retreated from the principles. Moreover, I am bound by the decision of our Supreme Soviet and our delegation. It immediately said in very serious terms in Alma-Ata that we must not without fail that this is not a total observance of the rules, although they considered that we had to make a concession and admit these republics.

I even made the following statement. I should like to read it out to you because it is evidently important: The delegation of the Republic of Belarus considers that in the process of setting up the Commonwealth of Independent States, all states must absolutely adhere to the following principles:

First, observance of those human rights set out in the universal declaration of human rights and other generally recognized international legal acts and also observance of the rights of national minorities.

Second, to solve all disputes by peaceful means and negotiations. Proceeding from this, the delegation of the Republic of Belarus believes that preservation of its membership of the Commonwealth of Independent States is only possible when all the above-mentioned principles are being observed. This statement has been supported by Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin and all the participants. We have followed this course. If our decision will help to normalize the situation and these principles are observed, then the decision is right. If problems arise, we will return to this question. [passage omitted]

We are now about to be cut open an abscess which is decades old. The whole structure was there to teach a person to live the following way: You work honestly, and the state will look after you. Study Marxism-Leninism diligently and say that these are your convictions, and your future is assured. We should be thinking now for ourselves, fight for our rights, provide for ourselves. But, of course, there are groups whom we simply must take care of now. It is not their fault that they are now in need of self-reliance, and it is our duty to take care of them because we are the successors of that old structure.

But there is also another question. Everybody wants it this way: You may take any decisions as long as our condition does not deteriorate. This will not happen. I think that those who demonstrate ability for good work—not just saying “give me a good job and a good salary, then do whatever you like”—these persons will become self-reliant much sooner. This is a big problem for us in Belarus and in other states which were the former members of the USSR. I think that a person should think about how to solve his own problems himself under new conditions, because we keep on saying that we are approaching them.

There could be no such system where the introduction of a new economic principle like the market economy will leave everyone in a good situation. This would make no sense. The market economy is based on everyone acting in self-interest. One should become part of the structure. That is why naturally, at the initial stage, some people, especially those with a low initiative, those who, excuse me, have only learned to carry out orders, will experience some hardships. But I think that this will teach them to stand on their own feet, and they will work normally in the future. I should like to put it like this: People should learn to fish, the state should teach them how to fish.

And not just feed them, give them this fish. This is not my own saying, it has been in circulation for some time, but I like it very much. [passage omitted]

It is true, we have said that we only need help for our government to solve certain problems. We have said that we would appreciate help in solving our problem in grain—the hard wheat, with vegetable oil and baby food. As for other help, we, the Republic of Belarus and our government, are stating that by the norms of 1990, and these are very decent norms, we are capable of providing for the Republic of Belarus. Moreover, we are fulfilling all our delivery obligations to Moscow, even in this most difficult situation. Since the meeting of the leaders of the three republics in Belovezhskaya Pushcha, we have even increased these deliveries. We are saying that we will work to insure that our population will be provided for.

What we cannot do is to transfer at present to a new market system, and we are preserving the old distributive structures. We are forced to do this. We are indeed preserving them so that we can survive now. But all the time we will be letting go of these reins, as I have already said, to provide for ourselves. And in this regard, there is food.

You know what, I consider it degrading for the Republic of Belarus to receive cough syrup on which, perhaps, people in the United States are spending the last of their money. Their impulse is a noble one. Many public organizations have appeared which have embarked on the road of cadging. So, I was forced to officially announce, in the name of the government, that we do not bear any responsibility for the distribution of this aid and for the fact that it does not reach anyone. And you know, this was interpreted quite correctly. [passage omitted]

Both the thieving nature of enterprise and the savage nature of enterprise is also one of our characteristics. We ourselves are to blame for this. Basically, we are preserving some kinds of state structure which can be very easily deceived. Then we have not just the lawful burgeoning of enterprise, which buys some goods, basically possessing a lot of cash; it is clear that this is also taking place in criminal fashion. We are not unable to stop this. We are unable to stop all economic crime. Therefore, we have to intensify another process.

When, for instance, people say that any state goods can be obtained at a fabulous price in the Minsk cooperative yards, if these goods appear in state shops operating on the market principle or in private shops operating on the market principle, then the competitors will be weakened and go bankrupt. We must create not monopoly supply but competitor supply. That is the only way. For this we will have to experience some difficult moments. But if the people are thoroughly convinced that by this road we will end this mafia which has monopoly power, then it will be much easier to put an end to the mafia in conditions of competition. Then the problem will fall away by itself.

[Vorobyevskiy] Stanislav Stanislavovich, to continue the economic theme, I should like to ask you, I think that of late we have been rushing from one extreme to another. Previously we talked about the working class as the hegemonist. Now as the hegemonists we have the entrepreneurs. But national wealth is being created, or more often than not now, is not being created at specific work places at specific work benches. How will the impulses from the economists and from those same entrepreneurs finally get to each working place where the national wealth should be created?

[Shushkevich] Excuse me for not giving a direct answer, but it is you who are rushing to extremes. There is no doubt that there are more such problems in Moscow than in Minsk. We are not rushing to extremes. We are, on the whole, evidently more conservative. I should draw your attention to the fact that economic indicators for some places, for example for the city of Minsk, have not only avoided decline or moderate decline in the recent past, this year they have even shown some growth. It would be monstrous for someone to tear his hair and rush into the market economy, or to say that the working class will be the hegemonist or the entrepreneur will be the hegemonist. [passage omitted]

[Velman] Stanislav Stanislavovich, I should like to return to the subject of the Commonwealth, the Commonwealth of Independent States. There are very many questions about this. Maybe a question from (Kruglova) in Penza may be taken as typical of this group. The European union has a single European Parliament. We, on the other hand, are expelling the Union parliament and other vestiges of the center, although we will continue to need them in the future. What do you think about this?

Let me also ask you a personal question, because I represent the Baltic republics on this program, it turns out. What will be the relationship between the Commonwealth of Independent States and those independent republics which do not join the commonwealth? I am referring, in particular, to the Baltic republics.

[Shushkevich] I think that the Balts have always been calm and sensible people. They have never taken hasty decisions. What are the Baltic republics saying at the moment? They are saying that they will formulate a joint attitude. That at least is what the press is saying—there could be some distortion here. I have had talks with the leaders of some Baltic republics. I think that it is the Commonwealth's task to insure that it makes itself attractive to Baltic republics which might want to join. I believe that, because of the principles on which it is founded, it is already earning the respect of the Baltic republics. I do not rule out the possibility that they might wish to join it in due course. Maybe I am being too optimistic. But I believe that such a thing could happen. [passage omitted]

I still have not replied to the question about the European Parliament and the comparison with other nations.

Before the European Parliament was set up, there was a national parliament in each of the European states. Parliamentary principles were refined to such a high degree that it proved possible to move on to a higher stage, the establishment of the European Parliament in Strasbourg. I am not saying this from things I have read in booklets or newspapers but from the results of talks which I have had with deputies from that parliament, its leaders, and so on.

What have we, on the other hand, tried to do? Here in Belarus—and I do not shrink from saying this in the hearing of so many listeners—here in Belarus our parliament has sometimes worked in an unprofessional manner. On those occasions, emotions have got the upper hand. But the emotional element is steadily declining. I think that the decisions of the Belarus Parliament show that its qualifications and civic responsibility are increasing with each passing day. All the same, we need to improve things further. When we reach this stage of perfection, the Commonwealth itself may need such a body. But this question has not yet arisen.

[Velman] Stanislav Stanislavovich, permit me to ask you a question half in jest. Would the Commonwealth of Independent States accept any European country which wished to join?

[Shushkevich] And why not? Why not? Incidentally you are anticipating an issue. The fact is that wishes are being expressed by some very substantial political figures of European states that the issue of their entry into the Commonwealth be examined, and my second dream, so to speak, is to create the kind of commonwealth they would like to join. I have to tell you that yesterday we decided the question [corrects himself] we were unable to resolve the question of the entry of several former subjects of the former Soviet Union, because in the opinion of the leaders, of all the leaders of the states, it was not possible to resolve this question positively for the present. I stress, for the present, because we were not convinced—I repeat, we can make mistakes—but we are not convinced that human rights are being observed there to the proper extent and this needs to be studied, it needs to be seriously studied, and a decision can only be taken after the results of serious study of that kind.

[Vorobyevskiy] Stanislav Stanislavovich, a mass meeting is currently taking place at the doors of the Ostankino television center. One of the slogans defends the former Union. As we see, the process of forming the Commonwealth is applauded by some, but others do not like it. I think that the purpose of our program is not to display passions of any kind, but a process of understanding. On the way toward this process of understanding, I think we have to ask ourselves the most acute questions, including ones like the following one which comes from (Tikhomirov, Nikolay Filippovich), in the city of Moscow. The future of the individual states that have formed themselves from the republics of the union is that of a raw materials appendage of world capital: They will be headed by puppet governments. I think that this

question is roughly in keeping with the views of those people who are now holding a mass demonstration outside our doors.

[Shushkevich] I do not think that people view Russia in that way, that it will be a raw materials appendage, because this is a highly developed country with an appropriate economic potential and with raw materials resources and so on. But going on from there, this is simply a method of intimidation. For example, we are indeed in great need of raw materials linked to the monopoly of raw materials markets, but we want to resolve these questions in return for money, in return for our labor, but please do not launch attacks on our independence, on our distinctiveness, on our desire to sort out our own problems; we will accept good advice with pleasure.

I believe that the average age of the people who have gathered to take part in the meeting where you are will be quite high. This is not their fault, you understand, but their misfortune, that they have believed so sincerely—and I myself have gone through that stage—that they have believed so sincerely that super-perfect propaganda of the Soviet way of life and the superiority of everything Soviet in general. I believe that they, too, will become convinced that this is not the only option for the construction of a good life. [passage omitted]

Let us build our economy sensibly, because if a part of it is done badly, then it is impossible to make a highly organized structure overall. We say let us do it well, first of all putting right a part before moving on to put right the whole. What is wrong in that? We are preserving single strategic armed forces. We are reorganizing things from the structure that used to exist into the structure that exists now. I believe that what is necessary is simply true, meaningful, and deep explanatory work about what has happened.

I think a wonderful event has taken place. But it is a fact that there are people who cannot imagine things outside those old structures. One's attitude toward it has to be one of respect, and one has to try to make them into one's allies.

[Kloskovskiy] Stanislav Stanislavovich, continuing the discussion about problems of sovereignty, there are very many questions on a topic which has been formulated most concisely perhaps by (Pasmurtsov, Vasilii Fedorovich), our viewer from the settlement of (Zastavl). Can a republic regard itself as a sovereign state if it does not have a national army and its own currency?

[Shushkevich] Well, this is a serious question. No doubt these attributes are virtually obligatory. But the point is that we have to start somewhere. We cannot lump everything together at the start. Furthermore, Europe is heading for a single currency. I do not rule out the possibility that individual states in the Commonwealth may have their own currencies. This is not prohibited. I can tell you that if Belarus had sufficient material wealth, if it had reserves, if it had sufficient assets with which to create its own hard

currency, we would probably go for this option. But the risk involved in such a step is very great.

Therefore, I think we need to have an agreed policy and to carry out the accords honestly. In our country, the center used to print money without asking anybody for permission. The Commonwealth cannot do things this way—in principle. I believe there are other ways of proceeding. The future of the European Currency Unit is, perhaps, not yet sufficiently clear for us to follow this road. But maybe there is a way of stabilizing the ruble. Our governments are considering and assessing this possibility, and various bodies are at work, seeking such a way forward.

Now for the army, the army. There are quite a few military formations on Belarussian territory. Now let's be frank. After all, they are not defending Belarus alone. They are also defending Russia, in accordance with the old military doctrine that somebody out there is threatening somebody here. So, this must be sorted out.

First, Russia must work out its own military doctrine. Maybe it has one already. I am not in a position to know. But, despite the changed situation, Belarus itself does not have a military doctrine either. We must draft and work out this doctrine, then mold the army to conform with it.

It is already clear that the Commonwealth cannot exist without national military formations. That means that there will be a combination of some military detachments stationed here—which really will be Belarussian, say—and strategic forces which will be stationed on the territory of Belarus and other members of the Commonwealth. They will be responsible for our strategic defense. However, in the event of extraordinary contingencies—I am referring to the danger of war—our Belarussian armed forces will probably come under joint command, if provision for this is made in the treaty. That is what I expect to happen. That is how I see it. Professionals may propose a different scheme.

I think the heads of state will sign an agreement and the parliaments will assess the quality of their work. If they ratify it, it will mean that the right decisions have been taken.

[Velman] Stanislav Stanislavovich, unfortunately time is no longer on our side. It is working against us now. The program is coming to an end. In accordance with another tradition of our program, we will now ask you make a final statement.

[Shushkevich] Esteemed ladies and gentlemen, esteemed comrades! I am very glad that I have been given the opportunity to speak today on the all-Russian ... all-Union ... all-Commonwealth television service. I do not want Minsk to be regarded as a center which claims to be the capital, which claims special powers. In our city we want to create conditions for the operation of those small coordinating bodies which the Commonwealth needs. This question can only be resolved if all members of the Commonwealth want to have such bodies here. We don't

want all these bodies to be concentrated in the city of Minsk. After all, it would be impossible to coordinate maritime activities, for example, from a maritime power like Belarus! Therefore, common sense should prevail, rather than centrist tendencies and a desire to establish or concentrate something in the city of Minsk. Minsk has no such ambitions.

Second, we very much want the principles of tolerance and trust to be the dominating principles in the Commonwealth. We no longer have the structure which engendered distrust. In the past we always had to do as we were told. All the states which belong to the Commonwealth, including Belarus, can now decide all these questions for themselves. I believe that mutual understanding, mutual attraction, mutual respect and, generally speaking, revival of national culture are obligatory attributes of this Commonwealth. I believe that cultural achievements are always compatible. Cultures complement each other. They cannot develop at cross purposes. When we achieve this necessary level of culture—and nobody stands in our way now—our Commonwealth will, I think, be a wonderful Commonwealth.

Minsk itself will simply be a small city—I say “small” because we are completely [sentence as heard]. I think it will be the kind of center it will be a pleasure to visit. Thank for your attention. [passage omitted]

Comments on Commonwealth

PM2312110091 Paris LE FIGARO in French
19 Dec 91 p 4

[Interview with Belarus Supreme Soviet Chairman Stanislav Shushkevich by Irina de Chikoff in Minsk—date not given]

[Text] [Chikoff] Do you think that James Baker's arrival in Minsk is the first step toward U.S. recognition of the sovereignty of the Belarussian Republic?

[Shushkevich] Do you think that I am as naive as that? The United States is only looking after its own interests.

[Chikoff] Is Belarus' independence not part of its interests?

[Shushkevich] I think that the United States is showing interest in our country because our stance on the nuclear arms question is perfectly clear. We want to become a nuclear-free state, a neutral country.

[Chikoff] Like Switzerland?

[Shushkevich] That is a nice image, but things are much more complicated in reality.

[Chikoff] After the Minsk agreement on the new Commonwealth of Independent States, the opposition in Belarus said that you had betrayed the country. Is this agreement incompatible with the republic's sovereignty which was proclaimed on 24 August?

[Shushkevich] There are very intelligent people in the Belarussian parliamentary opposition, but there are also

people who are giving way to their feelings. The Commonwealth formed by Russian, the Ukraine, and Belarus is based on the independence of each of those states. There are very few joint bodies, and they are transitional bodies. Our aim was essentially to permit the free circulation of people and information between our countries.

It is a Commonwealth designed for the people who, through their states, are members of it. People will one day have to stop saying just anything. We are all attached to the same rope. Some are climbing more quickly, others more slowly, but that does not make much difference. The fact is that we are all in the same boat.

[Chikoff] Is there a great difference between the Union treaty which Mikhail Gorbachev proposed and the Minsk Commonwealth?

[Shushkevich] We are a real Commonwealth of Independent States and not states gathered round a center.

[Chikoff] Will you accept all the republics which formed part of the former USSR into that Commonwealth?

[Shushkevich] We are not rejecting anybody. But I am in favor of not accepting the states which are at war with each other or those which are the theater of armed interethnic conflicts.

[Chikoff] Scarcely had the agreement been signed than the Ukrainian president announced the creation of a national army and became its commander in chief. Is this not the first violation of the Commonwealth's principles?

[Shushkevich] Not at all. You must carefully reread the text of the Minsk agreement. Every republic is free to create its own armed force. It is the so-called strategic forces which are under the same single command. I do not want to interfere in the Ukraine's internal affairs, but let us say that the Ukrainians are in more of a hurry than us. Their priorities and ours are not exactly the same.

[Chikoff] What is the priority in Belarus?

[Shushkevich] Economic reforms. Our situation is not as bad—I am talking about living conditions—as those in some neighboring countries. But it may deteriorate because our neighbors are suffering more shortages. In addition, the devaluation of the ruble is increasing the risks of destabilization.

[Chikoff] Are you thinking of creating a national currency?

[Shushkevich] Not in the immediate future, because we are not ready to do so. Creating a currency is very easy, the problem is how to guarantee its value. Credits are necessary. However, to secure credits, political stability is crucial. And we are returning to economic problems.

[Chikoff] You are chairman of the Supreme Soviet. According to the opposition, the Belarussian parliament was elected two years ago in conditions which are rather

unsatisfactory from the viewpoint of democracy. Are you going to ask the Belarussians to vote again?

[Shushkevich] It is true that the whole Supreme Soviet was not elected on totally democratic bases, but I do not think that new elections are now essential. I repeat that this is not the priority. We must take economic measures. That is what we are doing. It is what we should do. We must set things in motion and not launch into an election campaign which would merely postpone action.

[Chikoff] Before becoming chairman of the Belarus Supreme Soviet, you were a university lecturer in nuclear physics and electronics. Why did you suddenly enter politics?

[Shushkevich] First, it was the university which urged me to stand for election. Second, I wanted to advise the authorities who, in my view, were handling things very badly. Once elected, I realized that these people were not any stupider than others but that, in defending the system, they were defending their own interests.

[Chikoff] Was it in Belarus' interests to be part of the Minsk Commonwealth?

[Shushkevich] It is in the interests of the people living there.

Romania Recognizes Independence

LD2212222391 Minsk Radio Minsk Network
in Belarussian 0400 GMT 22 Dec 91

[Text] According to the Republic of Belarus Foreign Affairs Ministry, the Government of Romania has decided to recognize the Republic of Belarus as an independent state. The Romanian Government has also stated that it is ready to establish diplomatic relations with the Republic of Belarus, develop friendly relations, and cooperate on the basis of the principles of international law, the provisions of the CSCE Final Act and the Paris Charter for a new Europe.

Moldova

Guards, Women Attack Dnestr Police Battalion

LD2312174191 Moscow TASS in English
1728 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Text] Kishinev December 23 TASS—A group of armed guards and a crowd of women attacked a police battalion in the city of Bendery on Sunday [22 December], seizing two armed personnel carriers, two trucks and one jeep, the Moldavian Interior Ministry said on Monday [23 December].

The conflict between Moldova and the Dnestr republic, inhabited mostly by Russians and Ukrainians opposing Moldova's integration with Romania, worsened on December 13 after armed clashes between local police and Dnestr republic's guards killed seven and wounded 11 people.

Leaders of the Dnestr republic, which proclaimed independence from Moldova and elected its first president earlier this month, accused Moldovan police of unprovoked invasion of Dubossary.

Moldova, however, said the conflict was provoked by Dnestr guards who fired on buses with police officers.

Popular Front Condemns Signing Alma-Ata Accord

OW2412013291 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1720 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Transmitted by KYODO]

[Text] The Popular Front of Moldova (PFM) has described the signing by President Mircea Snegur of the protocol for the agreement on the forming of a community of independent states as "another obstacle to the national liberation movement of Romanians on territories occupied and annexed in 1940".

According to a statement published by the PFM in Chisinau [Kishinev] today (December 23), the Alma-Ata protocol was signed in an atmosphere of traditional secrecy and in a fashion typical of totalitarian communist regimes, without the Moldovan parliament having been consulted first.

The PFM maintains that Moldova's membership in the Community of Independent States will not help it solve any of its major social or political problems. Moreover, it will, the PFM believes, serve to aggravate the crisis, since it "only means that the occupied and annexed Romanian territories will remain within the sphere of influence of the former Soviet empire".

As IF [INTERFAX] has learnt, President Snegur is going to speak about his signing of the Alma-Ata protocol in parliament tomorrow.

Ukraine

More on Baker-Kravchuk Arms Reduction Talks

PM2012122991 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA
in Russian 20 Dec 91 First Edition p 1

[Lieutenant Colonel N. Gorenko report under the rubric "Direct Line": "Ukraine To Steer Course Toward Becoming Nonnuclear State"]

[Text] Kiev—Late on 18 December evening after conducting the first hour-long talk behind closed doors, U.S. Secretary of State J. Baker and Ukrainian President L. Kravchuk made a statement for the press.

L. Kravchuk expressed his satisfaction at the "the U.S. analysis of the situation and its stance with regard to the Ukraine." He emphasized that the republic will adhere to principles of democracy and reform and considers itself heir to all the former Union's agreements, that it intends to steer a course toward creating a nonnuclear state, supports in all ways the idea of completely

destroying strategic and tactical weapons, and will stand for unified control over their nonuse and initiate and facilitate ratification of the Treaty on the Reduction of Strategic Nuclear Forces concluded between the USSR and the United States.

The Ukrainian president addressed a request to the secretary of state that American experts be sent to the republic to assist in resolving problems of nuclear arms reduction. He considers that, providing this is done, the process may be accomplished not over seven years as was planned earlier, but in a shorter period. "We are satisfied with everything that was said about the development of democracy in the Ukraine and about preparations for a market economy," J. Baker emphasized. He stated that the Ukraine is ahead of the other republics of the former Union in resolving these problems, "as well as with regard to nuclear disarmament."

Kravchuk Stresses Commonwealth No 'State'

LD2412112491 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1000 GMT 24 Dec 91

[*"Television News Service" feature*]

[Text] The Commonwealth of Independent States is not a state. Fears of people who think that we joined some kind of new union with some kind of center are groundless. This was stated by Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk when commenting on the results of the Alma-Ata meeting. All relations between independent states are to develop on the basis of mutual recognition and on the principle of equality. But, Kravchuk thinks, some leaders will need time to get used to idea that one can live without the center.

President, Russian Delegation Concur on Ties

OW2012123591 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1147 GMT 19 Dec 91

[Transmitted by KYODO]

[Text] Yesterday's talks in Kiev between Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk and a governmental delegation of the Russian Federation, led by State Secretary Gennadiy Burbulis, revealed no serious differences in the two sides' approaches to bilateral relations and to the independent states' membership of the Commonwealth, Russia's First Deputy-Foreign Minister, Fyodor Shelov-Kovedyayev, told IF [INTERFAX].

In his opinion, it is a welcome fact on the eve of the Alma-Ata talks which are to begin on December 21.

More on Foreign Minister's Talks With Genscher

PM2412110991 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 23 Dec 91 p 4

[Yevgeniy Grigoryev account of interview with Ukrainian Foreign Minister A.M. Zlenko under the "PRAVDA Interview" rubric; date of interview not

given: "Diplomatic Relations Between Kiev and Bonn Are Not Far Off, Says Ukrainian Foreign Minister Following Visit to FRG"—first paragraph is PRAVDA introduction]

[Text] Bonn—Visiting Bonn without seeing Bonn—this is the fate of many official visitors to this city. It was also the case with Ukrainian Foreign Minister A.M. Zlenko, who came here at the invitation of the head of the German Diplomatic Service H.-D. Genscher. Almost all the time was taken up with meetings and talks.

[Grigoryev] What was discussed during the talks?

We discussed wide-ranging questions, Anatoliy Maksimovich replied. They concerned processes currently under way in the former Soviet Union, questions connected with the establishment of the Commonwealth of Independent States, and also the prospects of the development of cooperation between the Ukraine and Germany. We met with understanding for our problems and were given assurances that cooperation between the two states will develop on the basis of equality, as is fitting for sovereign and independent states.

We reached an accord to elaborate a treaty on cooperation between our states in the near future, the Ukrainian minister said further. We discussed the question of a visit by heads of state. A proposal was elaborated on the establishment of an economic cooperation council, which would be in charge of questions pertaining to the coordination, planning, and supervision of economic activity.

[Grigoryev] Did you discuss the question of the recognition of the Ukraine and the establishment of diplomatic relations?

It goes without saying that this question was at the focus of attention, A.M. Zlenko said. I must say that we are neither begging for nor demanding recognition. We know, and Genscher confirmed this in conversation, that the Ukraine will be recognized in the very near future. We understood that waiting for the results of the Alma-Ata presidents' conference was a delaying factor. Toward the end of our talks with Genscher, which lasted 3 hours, news of the results came through. I am returning to Kiev confident that the Ukraine's recognition will come in the very near future. More than that, we have agreed to establish diplomatic relations.

[Grigoryev] Anatoliy Maksimovich, do you believe that some kind of coordination of the former Union republics' foreign policy is essential?

We proceed from the understanding that foreign policy cannot be isolated and stand aside from the general processes currently under way in the world and which revolve around major international problems, the Ukrainian foreign minister explained. Naturally, we will conduct our own foreign policy which will be in keeping with the needs, aspirations, and national interests of our people and our state. As for coordination, the agreement

signed in Brest, as is known, speaks of consultations. I believe that such consultations will be held, but without any kind of centralized or centrally managed organs. There will be a need for such meetings, we feel it right now. I believe that an establishment of a council of foreign ministers would not be justified at the moment. But at a later stage, I assume, we will come to some kind of agreement as regards maintaining contacts between our foreign policy departments at the appropriate level.

Supreme Soviet Discusses Foodstuff Situation

*LD1812170291 Kiev Radio Kiev International
Service in Ukrainian 2300 GMT 17 Dec 91*

[Text] Svitlana Zadvorna reports on results of the sitting in the Supreme Soviet of Ukraine:

On the deputies' demand Kostyantyn Masyk, deputy prime minister of the Ukrainian Government, delivered a report on the food situation in the Ukraine and its deliveries to other regions, particularly Russia.

Masyk pointed out that this year the Ukrainian Government was able to determine the volume of deliveries to other republics for the first time. He went on to say that according to the intergovernmental agreement on supply of foodstuffs for 1992, the Ukraine will ensure deliveries based only on bilateral interrepublican agreements. According to Masyk, the following volume of deliveries was envisaged for the next year: meat and meat products—340,000 tonnes; milk and dairy products—

(2,170,000) tonnes or 13% of the expected purchases; sugar—(1,651,000) tonnes or 32%; sunflower oil—301,000 tonnes or 35.9%.

Deputies asked Masyk questions about specific measures taken by the government to protect the republican market and provide the population of the republic with foodstuffs. Deputy Khmara accused Masyk of trying to deceive the deputies and said that the government had no right to sign such an intergovernmental agreement without prior consent of the Supreme Soviet. Khmara proposed a text of resolution on this issue: The resolution of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukraine on denouncing the agreement of sovereign republics-states on provision of foodstuffs in 1992.

Proceeding from the fact that the agreement of sovereign republics-states on provision of foodstuffs in 1992 contradicts the Act on Independence of the Ukraine, and its fulfillment inflicts losses on state interests of the Ukraine and its people and is illegal, the Supreme Soviet of the Ukraine decrees: 1) To consider the agreement null and void in relation to the Ukraine and to prohibit the Cabinet of Ministers holding to it; 2) To inform the participants of the agreement of its denunciation by the Ukraine; 3) To suggest that the Procurator General of the Ukraine should initiate a criminal case on the fact [words indistinct] and determine the responsibility of those who signed the mentioned agreement.

This text will be examined at the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukraine. The deputies made alterations to the Labor code. Then the report on preparation of the draft law on the press was delivered by Yuriy Bushmenko, the chairman of the State Committee for the Press.

Interrepublic Affairs**Presidents Discuss NKAO, Borders, Gas Supply***OW2012210291 Moscow INTERFAX in English
2000 GMT 20 Dec 91*

[Transmitted by KYODO]

[Text] The HABAR-SERVICE news agency says that during his stay in Alma-Ata, President Ayaz Mutalibov of Azerbaijan is going to have a meeting with President Levon Ter-Petrosyan of Armenia. The two presidents agreed on a meeting in a telephone conversation on December 19. Besides, they discussed the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh and border areas, including the possibility of resuming gas supplies from Azerbaijan to Armenia. Before flying to the capital of Kazakhstan on Friday [20 December], Mutalibov told journalists that it was in the interests of Armenia and Azerbaijan to make concessions to settle the conflict at an early date.

Armenia**President Welcomes Commonwealth Ideas***LD2312220691 Moscow TASS in English
1854 GMT 23 Dec 91*

[By ARMENPRESS-TASS correspondent Loris Gukasyan]

[Text] Yerevan December 23 TASS—The creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States is a logical outcome of development of the sovereign states, Levon Ter-Petrosyan, the Armenian president said in parliament today.

Highly estimating the role of the leaders of the three states who earlier signed an accord on the Commonwealth in Minsk, Ter-Petrosyan noted Armenia was one of the first republics to welcome a new Commonwealth and adheres to the idea of participation in all creative processes taking place in the territory of the former Soviet Union.

The ideas expressed in the intentions of the states unified into the Commonwealth, do not run counter to our policy of building an independent legal state, the president stressed. What is more, the prerequisites are being created for harmonious economic and social development of all the sovereign republics, which will no longer suffer from the pressure of the centre in any form. "The important thing is just to set up coordination bodies of the Commonwealth", he pointed out.

President's Decree on Return of Illegal Arms*NC2112182791 Yerevan Radio Yerevan Network
in Armenian 1950 GMT 19 Dec 91*

["Decree by the president of the Armenian Republic on the return of arms, ammunition, military hardware, and other types of military weapons illegally held by citizens and organizations"]

[Text] A tense situation has arisen in the republic because of the illegal possession of arms, ammunition, military hardware, and other types of military weapons by citizens and organizations. This is destabilizing the already complex situation and is posing a serious threat to the lives of the people. The number of grave crimes committed with the use such weapons is increasing, causing the death of innocent citizens.

Proceeding from the aforementioned and from the act on the establishment of the Defense Ministry of the Armenian Republic and guided by point 13 of Article Eight of the law on the president of the Armenian Republic,

I hereby decide that:

All citizens and organizations must by 29 December 1991 hand over to the Defense Ministry of the Armenian Republic all arms, ammunition, military hardware, and other military weapons which they are holding illegally.

Those who hand over the arms, ammunition, military hardware, and other military weapons by the deadline mentioned in the first point of this decree will be absolved of responsibility.

Those citizens and organizations who fail to hand over the arms, ammunition, military hardware, and other military weapons by the deadline mentioned will be called to account in keeping with the procedure laid down by legislation.

The responsibility for the implementation of this decree is placed on Defense Minister Sargsyan, Interior Minister Pogosyan, and Arutyunyan, head of the State Directorate for the National Security of the Armenian Republic.

[Signed] Levon Ter-Petrosyan, president of the Armenian Republic

[Dated] 19 December 1991, Yerevan

Strict Measures Enacted To Combat Fuel Crisis*NC2112165591 Yerevan Radio Yerevan Network
in Armenia 1730 GMT 20 Dec 91*

[Text] Gagik Arutyunyan, vice-president and prime minister, delivered a report on the energy problem. He pointed out the critical situation in the fuel-energy sector and reported that the fuel stocks are rapidly running out. Because of the recent energy crisis in Georgia, the railway passing through Georgia will not be able to operate fully. Under these conditions, the government

has worked out a four-day strict saving measure to ensure the subsistence of the republic and to meet the minimum needs of the population until some results are obtained from the measures already being taken.

Azerbaijan

National Council Ratifies Interstate Treaties

LD2212134391 *Moscow TASS in English*
1216 GMT 22 Dec 91

[By AZERINFORM correspondent Natan Barskiy]

[Text] Baku December 22 TASS—The National Council of the Azerbaijani parliament today ratified the interstate treaties with Ukraine, Byelorussia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Georgia. The treaties were presented by the president of the republic.

The ratification move found reflection in the Azerbaijani parliament's National Council resolution published in Baku newspapers.

Leader on Alma-Ata Meeting, Peace Prospects

LD2312222291 *Moscow Radio Rossii Network*
in Russian 2100 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Text] Refusal to take part in the Alma-Ata meeting would have led to Azerbaijan's political and economic isolation and, ultimately, would have dealt a serious blow to national security. This was stated by Ayaz Mutalibov, Azerbaijan's president, at a meeting with the republic's people.

Discussing relations with Armenia, Mutalibov said that the conclusion of the agreement in Alma-Ata will make it possible to resolve the conflict between the two republics.

Nagorno-Karabakh Appeals For Negotiations

NC2312155691 *Yerevan Radio Yerevan*
International Service in Armenian
1930 GMT 22 Dec 91

[Text] The Soviet of People's Deputies of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic [NKR] has sent an appeal to Azerbaijani President Mutalibov, the Azerbaijani parliament, and people.

The appeal states that the 10 December referendum held in Nagorno-Karabakh confirmed once again the will of the people of Nagorno-Karabakh, who chose the course of self-determination in establishing the NKR.

The appeal notes that the continuing war situation inflicts destruction and human losses on both sides. Motivated by the intention of ending this conflict, the NKR is ready to start negotiations with the Azerbaijani Republic on the basis of equal rights and responsibilities. The two peoples will continue to live side by side; history demands that this conflict be concluded. The NKR

respects the interests and rights of minorities living on its territory in accordance with international norms.

NKAO Clashes Continue; Troops Withdraw

NC2312192591 *Yerevan Radio Yerevan Network*
in Armenian 1730 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Text] Reports from Nagorno-Karabakh indicate that armed clashes are continuing. The subunits of the Azerbaijani special purpose militia detachment [OMON] are firing on the guard posts of the USSR Internal Affairs Ministry's Internal Troops. Missile and artillery attacks on Stepanakert and other Armenian settlements are continuing.

The withdrawal of the Internal Affairs Ministry's troops from Nagorno-Karabakh has begun and has generated enormous concern among the population of Nagorno-Karabakh Republic [NKR].

Local self-defense formations are, in effect, being left alone to face the Azerbaijani OMON and their military hardware.

The leadership of the oblast believes that the troop withdrawal will lead to new massacres and mass deportation of Armenians.

The executive committee of NKR has appealed to the leaders of the Commonwealth of Independent States to take measures to safeguard the population.

Subunits of Azerbaijani OMON have already concentrated in many points ready to attack. They are armed with tanks, armored cars, and artillery, notes the appeal. All types of pressure is being applied on the remaining internal troop subunits.

Further on Troop Withdrawal

OW2412004291 *Moscow INTERFAX in English*
1720 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Transmitted by KYODO]

[Text] Armenia's centre for supervising the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh informed IF [INTERFAX] that the interior troops of the Russian federation's Ministry of Security and Internal Affairs are being withdrawn from this region. Interior units are leaving the populated areas in the Gadрут region and have been temporarily located in the regional centre.

According to sources in the Armenian government, commander of the interior troops, Colonel-General V. Savin, explained the interior troops' withdrawal from Nagorno-Karabakh by the absence of legal ground for their further stay. He said, however, that the commanders of the interior troops were aware that this may lead to bloodshed and deportation of the Armenian population.

The leaders of Nagorno-Karabakh have urged the Commonwealth member-states to protect the population of this region.

The Armenian centre believes that the increasing number of instances of Azeris shooting at the military were aimed at accelerating the adoption of a decision on complete withdrawal of the interior troops from Nagorno-Karabakh. In the evening December 21, Azeri armed formations shot at the interior troops' post in the Martuni region. Servicemen had to open a return fire.

Armenian armed formations are also making attacks in Nagorno-Karabakh.

In Moscow, chief of the interior troops' public relations department, Mr. Anatoliy Uglanov, refused to comment on the reports about the withdrawal of the interior troops from Nagorno-Karabakh. He told IF that these questions "will be highlighted" on Tuesday [23 December], at a press conference in the press centre of the Russian Federation's Ministry for Security and Internal Affairs.

No Road Blockade Reported

*LD2412084291 Moscow TASS in English
0810 GMT 24 Dec 91*

[By correspondents Vadim Byrkin and Vladimir Gondusov]

[Text] Moscow December 24 TASS—According to verified data, there was no blockade of military convoys on Azerbaijani roads during their withdrawal from Nagorno-Karabakh. A unit of Interior Ministry troops unimpededly reached a populated area, from which they will be airlifted to their permanent stations.

The original report that the roads were blocked turned out to be untrue due to the lack of clarity about troop movements in the region. More accurate information reached here only late on Monday [23 December] night.

20 Killed in Armenian 'Guerrillas' Attack

*LD2412111891 Moscow TASS International Service
in Russian 1054 GMT 24 Dec 91*

[Text] Baku, 24 Dec (TASS)—Twenty people were killed during an attack by Armenian guerrillas on the Azerbaijani village of Meshali in Askeranskiy Rayon, the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Azerbaijani Republic reported today. Among the dead are women, old men, and children as well as four militia employees and two servicemen from the Azerbaijani Ministry of Defense.

As a result of measures taken, the attack was repulsed.

Georgia

Further Reportage on Tbilisi Crisis Events

Fighting Resumes After Sunset

*LD2312152791 Moscow TASS International Service
in Russian 1455 GMT 23 Dec 91*

[By correspondent Albert Kochetkov]

[Text] Tbilisi, 23 Dec (TASS)—Fierce exchanges of fire resumed outside the Georgian parliament building as soon as the sun set behind the mountains surrounding the republic's capital.

According to some reports, the defenders of the government headquarters managed to knock out a hail dispersal gun occupying a position held by the attackers outside the church almost opposite the parliament. But the president's opponents have reinforced barricades on the approaches to the center of Tbilisi, evidently fearing the arrival of reinforcements for the president from other cities in the republic.

Contradictory information is coming in about the number of casualties. The number of dead that have been reported ranges between 30 and over 50. Over 200 people have been wounded.

President's Removal 'By Force' Urged

*LD2312201891 Moscow POSTFACTUM in English
1855 GMT 23 Dec 91*

[Text] Commander of the armed opposition, Tengiz Kitovani: We are going to stand until the end. The only way out is a removal of President Gamsakhurdia by force. Tengiz Kitovani, commander of the National Guard units disobeying President Gamsakhurdia, also told PF [POSTFACTUM] that negotiations with President Gamsakhurdia did not bring the required result—Gamsakhurdia's resignation. Under the present situation the opposition sees the only solution in the removal of the president by force. In particular, Gamsakhurdia is charged of authoritarian behavior, violation of human rights, deliberate prolongation of the trials of political prisoners. According to one of the leaders of the opposition, former Prime Minister of Georgia Tengiz Sigua, the position of the president is to be abolished and Georgia is to become a parliamentary republic. Tengiz Kitovani told PF that the house of government will be seized within the next 24 hours. At present the house of government is hardly cannonaded. According to Kitovani, opposition troops have enough personnel, weapons and munition.

Rumors were spread in Tbilisi about the arrest of Kitovani. However, on December 23 at 5 P.M. he was at the Tbilisi Hotel accompanied by Tengiz Sigua and Vazha Kitovani. The Tbilisi Hotel is located approximately 200 meters from the house of government and serves as headquarters of the armed opposition and coordinating center of military activities against the present leadership of Georgia. On December 22, Gamsakhurdia had reportedly asked Sigua to grant him one hour to leave Georgia. Following a meeting, the president's request had been rejected and it had been decided that he should face a trial. Vazha Adamia, speaking to PF, repudiated reports broadcast over the republican TV that armed volunteer detachments had left various areas of the republic for the capital to defend the government. Adamia said that his detachment had blocked off approaches to Tbilisi and that it had enough forces to

withstand any attack. According to Adamia, the opposition on December 23 had disarmed, in the vicinity of Tbilisi, armed formations commanded by Tengiz Epatashvili, on their way to Tbilisi from Samachablo (South Ossetia). Tengiz Epatashvili is Gamsakhurdia's plenipotentiary representative in Samachablo. We must by no means allow entry of whatever armed detachments into the city, Adamia told PF, otherwise the whole capital will be turned into a combat zone, which will result in numerous senseless victims among the civilian population.

According to Tamila Andzhaparidze, head of the press center at Kitovani's headquarters, Tbilisi Mayor Tamaz Vashadze had been detained on the night of December 20 and 21, at an opposition rally, by rally participants themselves. Tamaz Vashadze had had with him a cocked Makarov pistol and a poison gas sprayer. Tamila Andzhaparidze said that the mayor would be released whenever he would like to.

President Willing To Share Power

*LD2312222191 Moscow Radio Rossii Network
in Russian 2100 GMT 23 Dec 91*

[Text] Georgian President Zviad Gamsakhurdia, speaking in an interview with a BBC correspondent, has expressed his desire to share power with the leaders of the opposition. However, Gamsakhurdia said, the opposition does not wish to hold talks. He flatly turned down its demands regarding his resignation. The Georgian president also noted that he has nothing against Georgia joining the Commonwealth of Independent States. I am studying this matter, Gamsakhurdia noted.

Meanwhile, armed clashes between the forces of the opposition and those of the president continue in Tbilisi. TASS reports that as a result of the clashes at least 50 people have perished.

Loyal Forces Aid President

*PM2312200191 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian
24 Dec 91 p 3*

[V. Andreyev report: "Stop Press..."]

[Text] PRAVDA special correspondent V. Andreyev contacted the permanent mission of the Republic of Georgia in Moscow by telephone and asked permanent representative P. Chkheidze to comment on the situation in Tbilisi.

Noting that the attacks by the opposition forces on Government House are not abating, P. Chkheidze rebutted reports claiming that President Z. Gamsakhurdia of Georgia has left the republic. "The president and forces loyal to him are defending themselves on the lower floors of the building. I have learned that reinforcements from a number of rayons in the republic are on their way to help the president."

Assessing the events which are taking place, P. Chkheidze stated:

What is happening is the illegal toppling of a lawfully elected president. A great deal could be said about mistakes of which, incidentally, there are plenty on both the opposing sides, but subjecting the president and people loyal to him to howitzer fire, you will agree, is in no way compatible with the democracy to which the opposition pays lip service.

According to preliminary information available to the permanent representative at 1600 hours on 23 December, between 15 and 17 people have died, and the number of the wounded has topped 50. He had no information about loss of life on the opposition's side. P. Chkheidze complained that the abundance of weapons freely available in the former USSR has now resulted in bloodshed in Tbilisi. Not only firearms are being used, but also hail guns, which are essentially intended for peaceful use.

Gamsakhurdia May Flee to Turkey

*LD2412031191 Moscow Radio Rossii Network
in Russian 0200 GMT 24 Dec 91*

[Text] ANI reports that the situation in the Georgian capital remains extremely tense. Automatic weapons and artillery fire continues in the streets surrounding Government House. The number of dead and wounded grows. Some assessments indicate approximately 1,000 people on each side are participating in the military actions; the actual number of participants is evidently somewhat higher. At least 15 people have been killed in the last 24 hours, and no fewer than 80 have been wounded. Former Prime Minister Tengiz Sigua, who is one of the rebel leaders, said during talks on the night of 22-23 December that Georgian President Zviad Gamsakhurdia expressed a willingness to resign. However, he later went back on that decision. In its turn, Tengiz Sigua said, the opposition will fight to the last, to the victorious end. Doctors in the ambulance teams participating in the events say Government House defenders are beginning to panic. Unconfirmed reports indicate that Tbilisi airport is under the control of Kitovani's subunits. There will evidently not be any question of talks in the very near future. Reports on Gamsakhurdia's whereabouts are unclear; however, to all appearances he is hiding in Government House.

Rumors are being spread in the opposition camp that President Gamsakhurdia will be given the opportunity to flee the republic for Turkey.

Owing to the military action, the streets of Tbilisi leading to Government House have changed beyond recognition. The old first school on Rustaveli Street, the House of Artists, and the Rustaveli cinema have been burned down. Just as before, television is not operating in the central part of the city, and the telephone exchanges have been closed. Georgian President Zviad Gamsakhurdia

expressed a willingness to share power with the opposition leaders. He gave an interview to a BBC correspondent. However, Gamsakhurdia said, the opposition does not want to agree to talks. He categorically turned down their demands for his resignation. Moreover, TASS reports that at least 50 people have already died in Tbilisi as a result of the fighting.

President's State Reported 'Normal'

*LD2412053391 Moscow TASS International Service
in Russian 0440 GMT 24 Dec 91*

[By correspondent Viktor Blokhin]

[Text] Moscow, 24 Dec (TASS)—Last night did not bring peace to Tbilisi; shooting at Government House from howitzer guns and armored personnel carriers resumed early in the morning. Georgian Foreign Minister Murman Omanidze reported to TASS this morning by telephone. He said that by 0600 in the morning the losses amounted to 30 people killed and 150 wounded. It is impossible to present more exact data at the moment. Gamsakhurdia's supporters, armed with machine guns, continue the defense.

Omanidze said "President Gamsakhurdia's state is normal. He is in the Supreme Soviet building and is not preparing to leave."

"As before, the tension is not abating in Tbilisi, but that cannot go on forever. We believe that common sense will prevail. The entire Republic has risen in defense of the lawfully elected president," Murman Omanidze said.

Minister Says President Still Governs

*LD2412105291 Moscow TASS in English
1032 GMT 24 Dec 91*

[By correspondent Igor Gvritishvili]

[Text] Moscow December 24 TASS—"The situation in Tbilisi remains uncertain and complex, although opposition forces will not manage, for sure, to bring government buildings under control within the next few hours," Georgian Foreign Minister Murman Omanidze has just told TASS over the telephone.

He emphasized that so far none of oppositionists managed to penetrate the Supreme Council building where the republic's President Zviad Gamsakhurdia and his family have taken shelter in a bunker, although the artillery shelling of the building is being continued.

Volunteer groups loyal to the legitimate government have begun to arrive in Tbilisi, the minister said and voiced hope that they will help tip the scales in favour of the president.

Omanidze once again denied rumours that Gamsakhurdia had allegedly left the republic. "I have just spoken to the president over the telephone. He is feeling well and continues to govern the state," the minister emphasised.

S. Ossetia Parliament Confirms Independence

*LD2112154391 Moscow TASS International Service
in Russian 1505 GMT 21 Dec 91*

[By correspondent Valeriy Shanayev]

[Text] Vladikavkaz, 21 Dec (TASS)—The press center of the South Ossetian republican information committee issued a statement today which emphasizes that "confirming the resolution on the unification of South Ossetia with Russia, adopted earlier, the session of the South Ossetian Supreme Soviet, held today in Tskhinvali, declared the independence of South Ossetia and sent a message with an appeal for recognition to the parliaments of the sovereign republics of the former Union."

Bearing in mind the deteriorating situation on the territory of South Ossetia, the calls for a new assault on Tskhinvali coming from Georgia, and the large military formations gathering around Tskhinvali, the session also decided to set up a republican defense committee and to give it the necessary plenipotentiary powers. The goal of the committee will be to defend the territory and the populated areas of South Ossetia; to maintain public order; and to ensure the rule of law and the rights of the citizens.

The renewed missile and artillery attacks on Tskhinvali and the villages of Znaurskiy Rayons added to the list of victims: one person killed, 12 civilians wounded. There are children, women, and elderly among the victims.

Kazakhstan

Supreme Soviet Ratifies Commonwealth Agreement

LD2412003691 Moscow *POSTFACTUM* in English
2226 GMT 23 Dec 91

[From the "Politics" section]

[Text]—On December 23, Kazakhstan Supreme Soviet ratified the accord on the establishment of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), with amendments of its own, and the protocol to the accord, signed on December 21 in Alma-Ata.

The Kazakhstan Supreme Soviet decreed that legal provisions of the former USSR shall be applied in the republican territory, until adoption of appropriate Kazakhstan legislative acts, in the part not running counter to the Constitution and legislation of Kazakhstan, and the accord on the establishment of CIS.

The Kazakhstan Supreme Soviet also ratified the accord on joint measures with regard to nuclear weapons, signed on December 21 by leaders of the RSFSR, the Ukraine, the Belarus Republic and the Kazakhstan Republic.

Nazarbayev Speaks on Commonwealth

LD2412010291 Moscow *POSTFACTUM* in English
2226 GMT 23 Dec 91

[From the "Politics" section]

[Text] President Nursultan Nazarbayev: On December 30, the mechanism of CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] operation and its face will be determined in Minsk.

Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev, speaking on December 23 to the republican supreme soviet, also said: I think that heads of states may meet twice or thrice a year, or on demand from one of the heads of states. Heads of governments may meet once a quarter.

I think that commissions must be set up at the council of heads of governments, which are to operate on a permanent basis. For instance, one commission, say, for a space agency, may work in Alma-Ata, for defense—in Moscow, for economy—in Minsk. Meetings of heads of states will be held, in turn, in republican capitals. According to Nazarbayev, on December 30, the heads of independent states are going to sign, in Minsk, an accord on a further utilization of the material base of foreign institutions of the former USSR.

Nursultan Nazarbayev also stated that heads of the independent states were offered to form international armed forces of the CIS, maybe something like the blue helmets.

We need these forces not to attack or fight. They should act like the UN troops—well-equipped volunteers who

come to make people sit and negotiate in case of any conflict instead of fighting each other. This issue is on the agenda.

Nazarbayev said that before the Alma-Ata meeting he sent invitations to 9 republics, including Armenia. He did not send invitations to other republics. Because the agreement was open for everyone Azerbaijan and Moldova did come. The Baltic republics have not yet stated their associated or any other membership, so I think this problem will be discussed at the council of state leaders.

On December 21 US secretary of state, James Baker, told Nazarbayev that Kazakhstan may become one of the first former Soviet republics officially recognized by the USA, said president of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, at the December 23 session of the republican supreme soviet.

All Republics Except Georgia Recognized

LD2412004891 Moscow *POSTFACTUM* in English
2226 GMT 23 Dec 91

[From the "Politics" section]

[Text]—On December 23, Kazakhstan Supreme Soviet adopted a resolution recognizing the state independence of republics of the former USSR.

The Kazakhstan parliament recognized the state independence of the Azerbaijan republic, the Latvian Republic, the Lithuanian Republic, the Armenian Republic, the Belarus Republic, the Kyrgyzstan Republic, the Moldova Republic, the Russian Federation, the Tajikistan Republic, Turkmenistan, the Uzbekistan Republic, the Ukraine and the Estonian Republic.

As regards recognizing the state independence of the Georgian Republic, Murat Auezov, chairman of the Kazakhstan Supreme Soviet's commission for external relations and inter-parliamentary contacts, addressing on December 23 the republican legislature, said: Until the circumstances related to developments in the Georgian Republic are fully cleared up, it would be reasonable to refrain from such a form of diplomatic contacts as a declaration recognizing independence of this republic... we have all very deep suspicions that both the rights of minorities and personal rights are really being violated in Georgia. Really dramatic events are going on there. And we have a right to express our attitude to what is going on there. In this case, we are also acting in the capacity of one of CIS participants, who declare protection of personal rights and the rights of peoples as one of their basic principles.

PLO Chairman Arrives in Alma-Ata

LD2312143891 Moscow TASS International Service
in Russian 1401 GMT 23 Dec 91

[By TASS diplomatic correspondent Andrey Surzhanskiy]

[Text] Moscow, 23 Dec (TASS)—Yasir 'Arafat, chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, arrived in Alma-Ata, the capital of Kazakhstan, today. TASS received this information from the Embassy of the State of Palestine in Moscow. The Arab guest is visiting the republic as part of his tour of Asian countries, which includes visits to China, Vietnam, and Laos.

Yasir 'Arafat is expected to meet Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev.

Praises Nazarbayev's Leadership

*OW2312221191 Moscow INTERFAX in English
2046 GMT 23 Dec 91*

[Text] Mr. Yasir 'Arafat, the leader of the Palestine Liberation Organization, urged President of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, during their meeting in Alma-Ata on Monday, to include the Palestinian problem in the agenda of the Commonwealth summit in Minsk on December 30.

Mr. 'Arafat emphasized that "if there is no peace in the Middle East, there will be no peace in Kazakhstan". "Your country is the centre of the world," he said and added that the time of the new political era will be counted from there. In his opinion, Mr. Nazarbayev was to play his role not only in the Commonwealth of Independent States, but also in the world arena. If the next conference on the Middle East takes place in China or Japan, he said, Mr. Nazarbayev should participate in it as a "key" participant.

Nursultan Nazarbayev noted that Kazakhstan was not an aggressive state and that it intended to establish peaceful relations with its neighbours. He said that Kazakhstan supported the Arabs' just struggle, but noted that all problems should be tackled peacefully. "Your problem is the problem of Palestine and Israel. I'm sure you will secure support in other states of the Commonwealth," Mr. Nazarbayev said in conclusion

Kyrgyzstan

Akayev Begins Official Visit to Turkey

WA2312080891

For Ankara Radio reportage on the visit by President Aksar Akayevich Akayev to Turkey, including reports on his talks with Turkish President Turgut Ozal, please see the Turkey section of the 23 December West Europe DAILY REPORT and subsequent issues.

Tajikistan

President Nabyev Establishes National Guard

*LD2412101291 Moscow All-Union Radio Mayak
Network in Russian 0900 GMT 24 Dec 91*

[Text] Tajik President Nabyev has adopted a decision to set up a National Guard in the republic. It will be comprised of 700 individuals. Men of any nationality who have undergone competitive selection can become guards. The National Guard will be stationed in Dushanbe and will be directly subordinate to the president of Tajikistan.

Turkmenia

Deputies To End Supreme Soviet Participation

*LD2412113491 Moscow TASS International Service
in Russian 0845 GMT 24 Dec 91*

[Text] Ashkhabad, 24 Dec (TASS)—The people's deputies of Turkmenistan who represented it in the parliament of the former Union are ending their activities in Moscow. This decision was reached at a meeting between the deputies and Turkmenistan's President Saparmurad Niyazov, the president's press service reports. The decision will be submitted to a session of the republic's Supreme Soviet for confirmation on 26 December.